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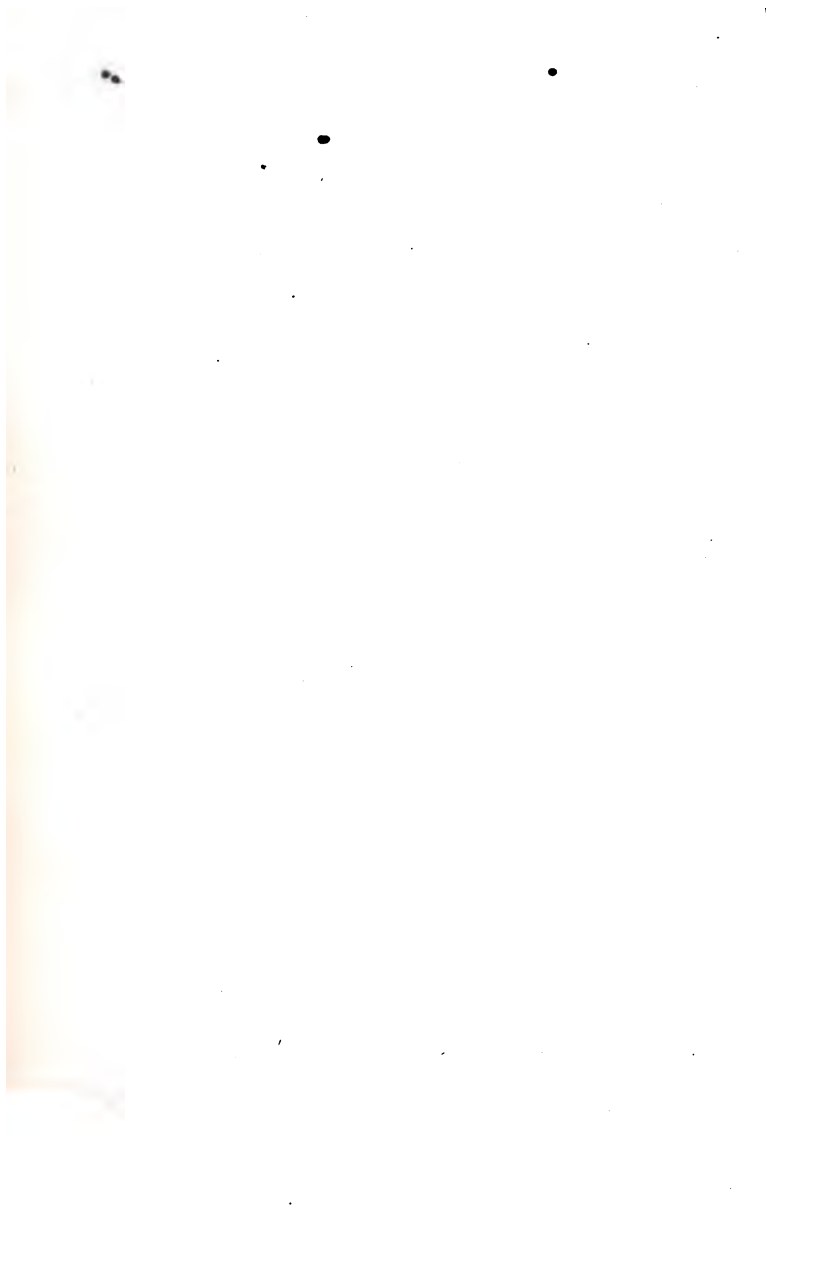
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SIR THOMAS MORE.



THE HOUSEHOLD

OF

SIR THOMAS MORE.

Libellus a Margareta More,

QUINDECIM ANNOS NATA, CHIELSELE INCEP'TVS.

Nulla dies sine linea.

NEW YORK:

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SIR THOMAS MORE.*

In composing, several years since, a small sketch of the life of this admirable person, which has been published in another biographical collection, I summed up his character as it appeared to me, in terms which it may be pardonable to repeat here ; for a second and more exact review of his conduct has furnished no ground for change of opinion, and to alter the diction of a few simple passages which the same pen could perhaps scarcely otherwise express, would produce but a silly counterfeit of originality. I shall perhaps take a similar liberty in a few subsequent instances, in the progress of the present work, and beg leave, once for all, to offer this apology for the practice, as well as for having said here so much on the subject.

To say that Sir Thomas More's was the brightest character of the age in which he lived, an age which exhibited the ferocity of uncivilised man without his simplicity, and the degeneracy of modern manners without their refinement, were praise beneath his merit ; to

* The following comprehensive sketch of the life of Sir Thomas More, is taken from Mr. Lodge's admirable "Portraits of Illustrious Personages of Great Britain."

challenge the long and splendid series of English biography to produce his equal at any period, might be deemed presumptuous ; but if the wise and honest statesman, the acute and incorrupt magistrate, the loyal but independent subject, constitute an excellent public man ; if the good father, the good husband, and the good master, the firm friend, the moral though witty companion, the upright neighbor, the pious Christian, and the patient martyr, form a perfect private character, ecce homo.

He was born in Milk-street, Cheapside, about the year 1480, the only son of Sir John More, a Judge of the King's Bench, by his wife the daughter of a Mr. Handcombe, of Holywell, in Bedfordshire. He acquired the learned languages at the hospital of St. Anthony in the parish of St. Benet Fink, in London, then a school of high reputation, from whence he was removed to St. Mary Hall, or as some have said, to Canterbury College, now Christchurch, in the university of Oxford. The Primate, Cardinal Morton, in whose family he passed some of his earliest years, in the character of a gentleman attendant, according to the fashion of that time, charmed as much by his wit as by his learning, often said to the great persons at his table, " This child here waiting, whosoever shall live to see it, will prove a marvelous great man ;" and the prediction soon began to be verified, for, even at the age of eighteen, the literary fame which he had acquired provoked the envy of some German critics, and the praise of others. Erasmus, at that time, wrote to him in the behalf of

Brixius, one of the former class, who had attacked him in an invective intituled "Antimorus," seriously intreating his mercy to that old and experienced disputant.

Just at this period he left the university, and began to study the law in New Inn, and afterwards in Lincoln's Inn, passing his hours of leisure in a circle, of which he naturally became the centre, composed of those whose wisdom and learning could best inform, and of those the vivacity of whose genius could most delight. At the age of twenty-one, when he had barely been called to the station of an utter barrister, he was elected a member of the House of Commons, and was presently distinguished there for a freedom of conduct which, at that time, could have arisen only from the purest motives. In that spirit he opposed in 1503 the requisition of a subsidy and three fifteenths, for the marriage of the Princess Margaret, daughter of Henry the Seventh, to the King of Scots, with such force and honesty of reasoning that the rejection of the demand is said to have been ascribed almost wholly to his endeavors. A privy councillor ran immediately from the house, and told the King, "that a beardless boy had overthrown all his purpose," and Henry satisfied at once his anger and his avarice by committing, under some frivolous pretences, the young senator's father to the Tower and forcing him to purchase his release by the payment of a fine of one hundred pounds. More, however, became so alarmed at the King's resentment, that he retired for a considerable time from the parliament, and from his

professional avocations, and during that interval, which seems to have been passed in a place of concealment, he studied geometry, astronomy, and music, in which last he much delighted, and exercised his pen in historical composition.

He returned at length to his practice at the bar, which presently became so extensive as to produce, according to his own report to his son-in-law, and biographer, Mr. Roper, an annual income of four hundred pounds, equal at least to five thousand in our days. He remained, however, in disfavor at court till after the accession of Henry the Eighth, who, with all his faults, easily discovered and generally encouraged, true merit. The King sent for him by Wolsey, and, on the first taste of his extraordinary powers, determined to employ him. Foreign negotiation was then held to be the most essential part of the education of a statesman. More was directed therefore in 1516 to accompany Tonstal, Bishop of Durham, one of his intimate friends, to Flanders, for the renewal of a treaty of alliance with the Archduke of Austria, afterwards Charles the Fifth, and on his return was warmly invited by Henry to devote himself to the service of the Crown, which his prudence, and indeed his interests, induced him at that time and for some years after, to decline. The King at length pressed him with such earnestness that he durst no longer refuse, and in 1519 he accepted the office of a Master of the Requests; was soon after knighted, and sworn of the Privy Council; and in the succeeding year appointed Treasurer of the Exchequer. More's hesitation had

been wholly unaffected. On the occasion of his becoming a Privy Councillor, he expressed himself (according to Stapleton, one of his biographers), to his bosom friend Bishop Fisher, in these terms; and the passage is rendered the more valuable by the features which it discloses, on such good authority, of Henry's character at that time:—"I am come to the court extremely against my will, as every body knows, and as the King himself often twitteth me in sport for it; and hereto do I hang so unseemly, as a man not using to ride doth sit unhand-somely in the saddle. But our Prince, whose special and extraordinary favor towards me I know not how I shall ever be able to deserve, is so affable and courteous to all men, that every one who has never so little hope of himself may find somewhat whereby he may imagine that he loveth him; even as the citizen's wives of London do, who imagine that our Lady's picture, near the Tower, doth smile upon them as they pray before it. But I am not so happy that I can perceive such fortunate signs of deserving his love, and of a more abject spirit than that I can persuade myself that I have it already: yet, such is the virtue and learning of the King, and his daily increasing industry in both, that by how much the more I see his Highness increase in both these kingly ornaments, by so much the less troublesome this courtier's life seemeth unto me."

In 1523 he was chosen Speaker of the House of Commons, and in the following year, says Hakewel, of the House of Peers. In the former capacity he again distinguished himself by his firm opposition to a subsidy,

and personally, to Wolsey, who came to the house, in his usual splendor, to influence the decision by his presence. On a question having been previously debated whether they should receive him but with a few attendants, or with his whole train, More is reported to have said, "Masters, forasmuch as my Lord Cardinal lately, ye wot well, laid to our charge the lightness of our tongues, for things uttered out of this house, it should not in my mind be amiss to receive him with all his pomp; with his maces, his pillars, his poll-axes, his crosses, his hat, and the great seal too; to the intent that if he find the like fault with us, then we may be the bolder, from ourselves, to lay the blame on those whom his Grace bringeth with him." The favor of Henry, whose natural generosity of spirit then perhaps remained unabated, was not impaired by this unusual freedom: More, in 1526, was appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; in the following year was joined to Wolsey, and others, in an embassy to the Court of France; and, in 1529, went with Tonsal to Cambray, to secure the payment of certain sums due to the King from Charles the Fifth, his success in which business won him the highest approbation. He was now Henry's most esteemed servant, and most familiar companion, but he has found some reasons to alter his opinion of his master's character. Roper informs us, that about this time, Henry coming suddenly, as he frequently did, to dine with More at his house at Chelsea, and walking long after dinner in the garden, with his arm about Sir Thomas's neck, Roper, after the King's

departure, congratulated him on so distinguished a mark of royal kindness, observing that no one except Wolsey had ever before experienced such condescension. "I thank our Lord, son," replied More, "I find his Grace my very good Lord indeed, and I believe he doth as singularly favor me as any subject within this realm; howbeit, son Roper, I must tell thee I have no cause to be proud thereof, for if my head would win him a castle in France, it would not fail to go off."

Henry's mind was now wholly occupied by his long-cherished project of the divorce. He had consulted and reasoned with More on that great subject, and had met with a firm opposition. So attached, however, was he to the man, or so anxious for the sanction of his coincidence, that he determined to gratify the one, or to bribe the other, by a grant of the first station under the crown. More was appointed, on the twenty-fifth of October, 1530, to succeed the disgraced Cardinal in the office of High Chancellor, which had never before been held by a layman, and this was the first serious blow struck by Henry at the power of the priesthood. He entered on it with melancholy forebodings, which were too soon verified. With a Christian perfection, which, as has been well said, and by a dissenter too, was such as made him "not only an honor to any particular form of Christianity, but to the Christian name and cause in general," his zeal for the Romish Church was equaled only by the benevolent spirit in which he exercised it. He had for some time beheld in silent horror the gradual approaches to the downfall of that church, and was now

called to a situation in which he was compelled either to aid its enemies with his counsels, and to ratify their decisions by his official acts, or to incur the severest penalties by his refusal. He virtuously preferred the latter, and, having persevered to the end in denying any degree of countenance to the proposed divorce, on the sixteenth of May, 1533, he resigned the seal, determined that it should never be placed by his hand on the instrument by which that process was to be concluded.

The definitive sentence was pronounced and published on the twenty-third, and the coronation of Ann Boleyn, to whom the impatient Henry had been for some united, at least by the forms of matrimony, was fixed for the thirty-first of the same month. More, doubtless by the King's order, was pressed by several of the Bishops who were to officiate, to be present at the ceremony, for his reputation stood so high in the kingdom that even the slightest color of approbation from him was esteemed important; but he steadfastly refused, and boldly declared to those prelates his conviction of the illegality of the marriage. Henry now sought to move him by terror. In the ensuing parliament a bill of attainder against him was agitated in the house of Peers, for misprision of treason in the affair of that enthusiast, or impostor, who was called the Holy Maid of Kent, and he was more than once cited before the Privy Council on other charges, but the evidence on each proved too weak even for the terrible fashion of that reign. The act of supremacy, which appeared in 1534, at length fixed his fate. When the oath prescribed

by it was tendered to him, he declined to take it, and was committed to the custody of the Abbot of Westminster, and on a second refusal, a few days after, to the Tower of London. Endeavors were now again ineffectually used to win him by persuasion, while the kind and merciful Cranmer as vainly endeavored to prevail on the King to dispense with the oath in More's case. After fifteen months' imprisonment, he was arraigned of high treason at the King's Bench bar, for denying the King's supremacy. Rich, the Solicitor General, afterwards Chancellor, was the sole witness against him, and the testimony of that wretch, whose name should be consigned to eternal infamy, consisted in the repetition of speeches which he had artfully drawn from More, during a visit to his prison, in a familiar conversation, which Rich had commenced by expressly declaring that he had no commission to agitate in it any matter regarding the prosecution. Much even of this evidence Sir Thomas positively denied, but the jury found him guilty, and he was sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; a doom which Henry altered, in consideration of the high office which he had held. He was beheaded upon Tower Hill on the fifth of July, 1535, and his revered head was ignominiously exposed on London Bridge, from whence after many days, it was privately obtained by his affectionate daughter, Roper, and by her placed in the vault of her husband's family, under a chapel adjoining to St. Dunstan's Church in Canterbury. His body was interred in the chapel of the Tower, but afterwards removed, at the solicitation of that lady, to the

parish church of Chelsea, and buried there, in the chancel, near a monument which he had some years before erected, with an inscription written by himself.

Perhaps of all the remarkable persons who adorned or disgraced the age in which he lived we are the most clearly acquainted with the life and character of Sir Thomas More ; and this—though few men have found more biographers, for his life has been ten times separately written and published—we owe chiefly to the perfect candor and sincerity which distinguished him. His acts and his sayings compose the history not only of his conduct but of his motives, and left to those who have written of him only the simple task of collecting facts, to which the fondest partiality could add no further grace, and on which even malice could have cast no blemish. But he lived without enemies, and since his death, Bishop Burnet only has dared to lift a pen against his memory. In his earnest devotion to the Catholic faith, and to the see of Rome, he was severe only to himself. The fury of conflicting zealots was calmed while they reflected on his virtues ; and when Rome celebrated his canonization with a just and honest triumph, the Church of England looked on in silent approbation. In his court no one ever presided with more wisdom, learning, and perspicacity ; with a more rigid devotion to justice ; or with more vigilance, impartiality, and patience ; when he quitted it, he left not a single cause undecided. The strictness of his loyalty, and his magnanimous independence, were always in perfect unison, because they flowed from one and the same source, an honest heart.

In all the domestic relations the beauty of his life was unparalleled. Erasmus has left us a glowing picture of him, retired, at Chelsea, in the bosom of his family. The passage has been thus translated: "More hath built near London, upon the Thames, such a commodious house as is neither mean nor subject to envy, yet magnificent enough. There he converseth affably with his family; his wife, his son, and daughter-in-law; his three daughters, and there husbands; with eleven grandchildren. There is not any man living so affectionate with his children as he, and he loveth his old wife as well as if she were a young maid; and such is the excellence of his temper, that whatsoever happeneth that could not be helped, he loveth it as though nothing could have happened more happily. You would say there were in that place Plato's academy; but I do the house injury in comparing it to Plato's academy, where there was only disputations of numbers, and geometrical figures, and sometimes of moral virtues. I should rather call his house a school or university of Christian religion, for there is none therein but readeth or studieth the liberal sciences: their special care is piety and virtue: there is no quarrelling, or intemperate words, heard; none seen idle; which household discipline that worthy gentleman doth not govern by proud and haughty words, but with all kind and courteous favor. Every body performeth his duty, yet there is always alacrity; neither is sober mirth anything wanting."

More himself has proved the correctness of Erasmus's account in the dedication, to an intimate friend, of his

Utopia, by expressions which I cannot help inserting here, for it is not easy to quit the story of his private life. "Whilst I daily plead other men's causes," says he (to use the words of his translator) "or hear them, sometimes as an arbitrator, other while as a judge: whilst this man I visit for friendship, another for business, and whilst I am employed abroad about other men's matters all the whole day, I leave no time for myself, that is for study: for when I come home I must discourse with my wife; chat with my children; speak with my servants; and seeing this must needs be done, I number it amongst my affairs, and needful they are, unless one would be a stranger in his own house; for we must endeavor to be affable and pleasing to whom either nature, chance, or choice, hath made our companions; but with such measure it must be done that we don't mar them with affability, or make them of servants our masters, by too much gentle entreaty and favour. Whilst these things are doing, a day, a month, a year, passeth. When then can I find any time to write? for I have not yet spoken of the time that is spent in eating and sleeping, which things alone bereave most men of half their life. As for me, I get only that spare time which I steal from my meat and sleep; which because it is but small, I proceed slowly; yet, it being somewhat, I have now at length prevailed so much, as I have finished, and sent unto you, my Utopia."

The chief singularity of his character, was a continual disposition to excessive mirth and the Lord High Chancellor of England was perhaps the first droll in the

kingdom. Lord Herbert, willing for obvious reasons, to find fault with him, and unable to discover any other ground, censures the levity of his wit; and Mr. Addison well observes that "what was philosophy in him would have been frenzy in any one who did not resemble him, as well in the cheerfulness of his temper as in the sanctity of his life and manners."

Feeling that gaiety was the result of innocence, he seems to have conceived that the active indulgence of it was a mortal duty. Among other hints of this remarkable opinion which are scattered in his works, speaking of the Utopian burials, at which he tells us none grieved, he says "when those to whom the deceased was most dear be come home, they rehearse his virtuous manners, and his good deeds, but no part is so oft or gladly talked of as his merry death." That his own was such is well known. He had not been shaved during his long imprisonment, and after he had placed his neck on the block, he raised his hand, and put his beard forward, saying that it should not be cut off, for it had committed no treason. His witticisms are to be still found in abundance even in every ordinary jest-book, and none have been better authenticated.

That Sir Thomas More should have found leisure for most extensive and various exercise of his pen is truly astonishing. In his youth he composed some pieces in English verse, which do him little credit, and would, had they not been his, have been long since forgotten. They are intituled, "A merry jest, how a searjeant would learn to play a frier." "A rueful lamentation on the

death of Elizabeth, wife of Henry the Seventh." "Certain metres for the book of Fortune." Ballads called "Lewys, the lost Lover," and "Davy, the dicer," and nine sets of lines, explanatory of as many devices painted on certain hangings in his father's house. The first and last of these are supposed to have been his earliest productions. His prose works in English, are a treatise on the text "Memorare Novissima, et in æternum non pecabis." A Dialogue, treating of the worship of Images and Reliques, praying to Saints, and Pilgrimages, and "touching the pestilent sects of Luther and Tyndale." "The Supplication of Souls," written against Simon Fische's popular tract named "The Supplication of Beggars." "A Confutation of Tyndale," in nine books. "An Apology," in answer to a book intitled "A Treatise of the division between the Spirituality and Temporality." "The Debellation of Salem and Bizance," written in reply to an answer to that Apology. "An Answer to the first part of the poisoned book which a nameless Heretic" (John Frith) "hath named 'the Supper of the Lord.'" "A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation." "A Treatise to receive the blessed body of Christ, sacramentally and virtually both." The life of Picus, Earl of Mirandola, translated from the Latin; and several letters, among which are many to his family, beautifully illustrative of his character. All these were collected, and published in 1557, in one very bulky volume, by his sister's son, William Rastall, the eminent lawyer, together with an English translation of the Utopia.

His Latin works are the lives of Edward the Fifth, and Richard the Third, unfinished, which may be found translated and completed by Bishop Kennet, in the best general collection extant of English history. The celebrated Utopia, of which twelve editions have been published in its original form, eleven in English, two in French, and one in Italian; and several smaller works, most of which were printed together at Louvain, in 1566, namely, "Expositio passionis Domini." "Pre-cationes ex Psalmis." "Quod pro fide mors fugienda non est." "Responsio ad convitia Martini Lutheri." "Imploratio divini auxilii contra tentationem, cum insultatione contra Dæmones, ex spe et fiducia in Deum." "Epigrammata,"—"Progymnasmata,"—"Epistolæ," and "Epistola ad Academiam Oxon." He also translated the Dialogues of Lucian into Latin, and wrote annotations on the works of that author.

Sir Thomas More, when about the age of twenty-four, married Jane, daughter of John Colte, of Candish, in Suffolk, and of Newhall in Essex; by whom he had an only son John; and three daughters, Margaret, wife of William Roper, of Eltham, in Kent, Uncle to the first Lord Teynham; Elizabeth, of John, son and heir of Sir John Dauntsey; and Cicely of Giles Heron, of Shacklewell in Middlesex. Their brother, who has been idly said to have possessed scarcely common understanding, married an heiress of the family of Cresacre, of Barnborough, in Yorkshire, and so acquired estates there which descended in the male line till the year 1795, when they fell by marriage to a family of Metcalf, the

heir-male of which assumed, with an honest pride, the surname of his great ancestor. Sir Thomas married, secondly, Alice Middleton, a widow, the "old wife" mentioned by Erasmus, in a passage lately cited, and we are told by others that she was ugly, ill-tempered and vulgar : by her he had no issue.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF SIR THOS. MORE.

CHELSEA, *June*, 18.

ON asking Mr. Gunnel to what use I s^d put this fair *libellus*, he did suggest my making it a kinde of family register, wherein to note y^e more important of our domestic passages, whether of joy or grieffe—my father's journies and absences—the visits of learned men, their notable sayings, etc. "You are smart at the pen, Mistress Margaret," he was pleased to say; "and I would humbly advise your journalling in y^e same fearless manner in the which you framed that letter which soe well pleased the Bishop of Exeter, that he sent you a Portugal piece. 'Twill be well to write it in English, which 'tis expedient for you not altogether to neglect, even for the more honorable Latin."

Methinks I am close upon womanhood.
 "Humble advise," quotha! to me, that hath so oft humblie sued for his pardon, and sometimes in vain!

'Tis well to make trial of Gonellus his "humble" advice: albeit, our daylie course is so methodicall, that 'twill afford scant subject for y^e pen—
Vitam continet una dies.

. . . As I traced y^e last word, methoughte I heard y^e well-known tones of Erasmus his pleasant voyce; and, looking forthe of my lattice, did indeede beholde, the dear little man coming up from y^e river side with my father, who, because of y^e heat, had given his cloak to a tall stripling behind him to bear. I flew up stairs, to advertise mother, who was half in and half out of her gogram gown, and who stayed me to clasp her owches; so that, by y^e time I had followed her down stairs, we found 'em already in y^e hall.

So soon as I had kissed their hands, and obtayned their blessings, the tall lad stepped forthe, and who s^d he but William Roper, returned from my father's errand over seas! He hath grown hugelie, and looks mannish; but his manners are

worsened instead of bettered by forayn travell; for, instead of his old franknesse, he hung upon hand till father bade him come forward; and then, as he went his rounds, kissing one after another, stopt short when he came to me, twice made as though he would have saluted me, and then held back, making me look so stupid, that I c^d have boxed his ears for his payns. 'Specialie as father burst out a-laughing, and cried, "The third time's lucky!"

After supper, we took deare Erasmus entirely over y^e house, in a kind of family procession, e'en from the buttery and scalding-house to our own deare Academia, with its cool green curtain flapping in y^e evening breeze, and blowing aside, as though on purpose to give a glimpse of y^e cleare-shining Thames! Erasmus noted and admired the stone jar, placed by Mercy Giggs on y^e table, full of blue and yellow irises, scarlet tiger-lilies, dog-roses, honeysuckles, moonwort, and herb-trinity; and alsoe our various desks, eache in its own little retirement,—mine own, in speciall, so pleasantly situate! He protested, with everie semblance of sincerity, he had never seen so pretty an academia. I should think not, indeede! Bess, Daisy, and I, are of opinion, that there is not likelie to be such another in y^e world. He

glanced, too, at y^e books on our desks; Bessy's being Livy; Daisy's, Sallust; and mine, St. Augustine, with father's marks where I was to read, and where desist. He tolde Erasmus, laying his hand fondlie on my head, "Here is one who knows what is implied in the word Trust." Dear father, well I may! He added, "There was no law against laughing in *his* academia, for that his girls knew how to be merry and wise."

From the house to the new building, the chapel and gallery, and thence to visitt all the dumbe kinde, from the great horned owls to Cecy's pet dormice. Erasmus was amused at some of their names, and doubted whether Dun Scotus and the venerable Bede would have thought themselves complimented in being made name-fathers to a couple of owls; though he admitted that Argus and Juno were goode cognomens for peacocks. Will Roper hath broughte mother a pretty little forayn animal called a marmot, but she said she had noe time for such-like playthings, and bade him give it to his little wife. Methinks, I being neare sixteen and he close upon twenty, we are too old for those childish names now, nor am I much flattered at a present not intended for me; however, I shall be kind to the little creature, and,

perhaps, grow fond of it, as 'tis both harmlesse and diverting.

To return, howbeit, to Erasmus; Cecy, who had hold of his gown, and had alreadie, through his familiar kindnesse and her own childish heedlessness, somewhat transgressed bounds, began now in her mirthe to fabricate a dialogue, she pretended to have overhearde, between Argus and Juno as they stooede pearcht on a stone parapet. Erasmus was entertayned with her garrulitie for a while, but at length gentlie checkt her, with "Love y° truth, little mayd, love y° truth, or, if thou liest, let it be with a circumstance," a qualification which made mother stare and father laugh.

Sayth Erasmus, "There is no harm in a fabella, apologus, or parabola, so long as its character be distinctlie recognised for such, but contrariwise, much goode; and y° same hath been sanctioned, not only by y° wiser heads of Greece and Rome, but by our deare Lord himself. Therefore, Cecilie, whom I love exceedingly, be not abasht, child, at my reproof, for thy dialogue between the two peacocks was innocent no less than ingenious, till thou wouldst have insisted that they, in sooth, sayd something like what thou didst invent. Therein thou didst violence to y° truth, which St.

Paul hath typified by a girdle, to be worn next the heart, and that not only confineth within due limits but addeth strength. So now be friends; were thou more than eleven and I no priest, thou shouldst be my little wife, and darn my hose, and make me sweet marchpane, such as thou and I love. But, oh! this pretty Chelsea! What daises! what buttercups! what joviall swarms of gnats! The country all about is as nice and flat as Rotterdam."

Anon, we sit down to rest and talk in the pavilion.

Sayth Erasmus to my father, "I marvel you have never entered into the king's service in some public capacitie, wherein your learning and knowledge, bothe of men and things, would not onlie serve your own interest, but that of your friends and y^e public."

Father smiled and made answer, "I am better and happier as I am. As for my friends, I alreadie do for them alle I can, soe as they can hardlie consider me in their debt; and, for myself, y^e yielding to theire solicitations that I w^d putt myself forward for the benefit of the world in generall, w^d be like printing a book at request of friends, that y^e publick may be charmed with what, in fact, it values at a doit. The cardinall offered me

a pension, as retaining fee to the king a little while back, but I tolde him I did not care to be a mathematical point, to have position without magnitude."

Erasmus laught and sayd, "I woulde not have you y^e slave of anie king; howbeit, you mighte assiste him and be useful to him."

"The change of the word," sayth father, "does not alter the matter; I shoulde *be* a slave, as completely as if I had a collar rounde my neck."

"But would not increased usefulness," says Erasmus, "make you happier?"

"Happier?" says father, somewhat heating; "how can that be compassed in a way so abhorrent to my genius? At present I live as I will, to which very few courtiers can pretend. Half-a-dozen blue-coated serving-men answer my turn in the house, garden, field, and on the river: I have a few strong horses for work, none for show, plenty of plain food for a healthy family, and enough, with a hearty welcome for a score of guests that are not dainty. The lengthe of my wife's train infringeth not the statute; and, for myself, I soe hate bravery, that my motto is, 'Of those whom you see in scarlet, not one is happy.' I have a regular profession, which supports my house, and enables me to promote peace

and justice ; I have leisure to chat with my wife, and sport with my children ; I have hours for devotion, and hours for philosophie and y^e liberal arts, which are absolutelie medicinall to me as antidotes to y^e sharpe but contracted habitts of mind engendered by y^e law. If there be anie thing in a court life which can compensate for y^e losse of anie of these blessings, deare Desiderius, pray tell me what it is, for I confesse I know not."

"You are a comicall genius," says Erasmus.

"As for you," retorted father, "you are at your olde trick of arguing on y^e wrong side, as you did y^e first time we mett. Nay, don't we know you can declaime backward and forwarde on the same argument, as you did on the Venetian war."

Erasmus smiled quietlie, and sayd, "What coulde I do? The pope changed his holy mind." Whereat father smiled too.

"What nonsense you learned men sometimes talk!" pursues father. "I—wanted at court, quotha! Fancy a dozen starving men with one roasted pig between them;—do you think they would be really glad to see a thirteenth come up with an eye to a small piece of y^e crackling? No; believe me, there is none that courtiers are more sincerlie respectfull to than the man who avows

he hath no intention of attempting to go shares ; and e'en him they care mighty little about, for they love none with true tendernesse save themselves.

“ We shall see you at court yet,” says Erasmus.

Sayth father, “ Then I will tell you in what guise. With a fool-cap and bells. Pish ! I won't aggravate you, churchman as you are, by alluding to the blessings I have which you have not ; and I trow there is as much danger in taking you for serious when you are onlie playful and ironical as if you were Plato himself.”

Sayth Erasmus, after some minutes' silence, “ I know full well that you holde Plato, in manie instances, to be sporting when I accept him in very deed and truth. *Speculating* he often was ; as a brighte, pure flame must needs be struggling up, and, if it findeth no direct vent, come forthe of y^e oven's mouth. He was like a man shut into a vault, running hither and thither, with his poor, flickering taper, agonizing to get forthe, and holding himself in readinesse to make a spring forward, the moment a door s^d open. But it never did. ‘ Not manie wise are called.’ He had clomb a hill in y^e darke, and stode calling to his companions below. ‘ Come on, come on ! this way lies y^e east ; I am advised we shall see the sun rise anon.’ But they never did. What a Christian he

woulde have made! Ah! he is one now. He and Socrates—the veil long removed from their eyes—are sitting at Jesus' feet. Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis!"

Bessie and I exchanged glances at this so strange ejaculation; but y^e subject was of such interest, that we listened with deep attention to what followed.

Sayth father, "Whether Socrates were what Plato painted him in his dialogues, is with me a great matter of doubt; but it is not of moment. When so many contemporaries coulde distinguish y^e fancifulle from y^e fictitious, Plato's object coulde never have beene to *deceive*. There is something higher in art than gross imitation. He who attempteth it is always the leaste successfull; and his failure hath the odium of a discovered lie; whereas, to give an avowedlie fabulous narrative a consistence within itselfe which permits y^e reader to be, for y^e time, voluntarilie deceived, is as artfulle as it is allowable. Were I to construct a tale, I woulde, as you sayd to Cecy, lie with a circumstance, but shoulde consider it noe compliment to have my unicorns and hippogriffs taken for live animals. Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, magis tamen amica veritas. Now, Plato had a much higher aim than to give a very pattern of

Socrates his snub nose. He wanted a peg to hang his thoughts upon—”

“ A peg? A statue of Phidias,” interrupts Erasmus.

“ A statue by Phidias, to clothe in y^e most beautiful drapery,” sayth father; “ no matter that y^e drapery was his own, he wanted to show it to the best advantage, and to y^e honour rather than prejudice of the statue. And, having clothed y^e same, he got a spark of Prometheus his fire, and made the aforesayd statue walk and talk to the glory of gods and men, and sate himself quietlie down in a corner. By the way, Desiderius, why shouldst thou not submit thy subtletie to the rules of a colloquy? Set Eckius and Martin Luther by the ears! Ha! man, what sport! Heavens! if I were to compound a tale or a dialogue, what crotches and quips of mine own woulde I not putt into my puppets’ mouths! and then have out my laugh behind my vizard, as when we used to act burlesques before Cardinall Morton. What rare sporte we had, one Christmas, with a mummerie we called the ‘Triall of Feasting!’ Dinner and Supper were broughte up before my Lord Chief Justice, charged with murder. Their accomplices were Plum-pudding, Mince-pye Surfeit, Drunkenness, and such like. Being con-

demned to hang by y^e neck, I who was Supper, stuf out with I cannot tell you how manie pillows, began to call lustilie for a confessor ; and, on his stepping forthe, commenct a list of all y^e fitts, convulsions, spasms, payns in y^e head, and so forthe, I had inflicted on this one and t'other. 'Alas ! good father,' says I, 'King John layd his death at my door ; indeed, there's scarce a royall or noble house that hath not a charge agaynst me ; and I'm sorilie afraid' (giving a poke at a fat priest that sate at my lord cardinall's`elbow) 'I shall have the death of *that* holy man to answer for.' "

Erasmus laughed, and sayd, " Did I ever tell you of the retort of Willibald Pirkheimer. A monk hearing him praise me somewhat lavishly to another, could not avoid expressing by his looks great disgust and dissatisfaction ; and, on being askt whence they arose, confest he c^d not, with patience, hear y^e commendation of a man soe notoriously fond of eating fowls. " Does he steal them ?" says Pirkheimer. ' Surely no,' says y^e monk. ' Why, then,' quoth Willibald, ' I know of a fox who is ten times the greater rogue ; for, look you, he helps himself to many a fat hen from my roost without ever offering to pay me. But tell me now, dear father, is it then a sin to eat fowls ?' ' Most assuredlie it is,' says the monk, ' if you in-

dulge in them to gluttony.' 'Ah! if, if!' quoth Pirkheimer. 'If stands stiff,' as the Lacedemonians told Philip of Macedon; and 'tis not by eating bread alone, my dear father, you have acquired that huge paunch of yours. I fancy, if all the fat fowls that have gone into it coulde raise their voices and cackle at once, they woulde make noise enow to drown y^e drums and trumpets of an army.' Well may Luther say," continued Erasmus, laughing "that theire fasting is easier to them than our eating to us; seeing that every man Jack of them hath to his evening meal two quarts of beer, a quart of wine, and as manie as he can eat of spice cakes, the better to relish his drink. While I—'tis true my stomach is Lutheran, but my heart is Catholic; that's as heaven made me, and I'll be judged by you alle, whether I am not as thin as a weasel."

'Twas now growing dusk, and Cecy's tame hares were just beginning to be on y^e alert, skipping across our path, as we returned towards the house, jumping over one another, and raysing 'emselves on theire hind legs to solioitt our notice. Erasmus was amused at theire gambols, and at our making them beg for vine-tendrils; and father told him there was hardlie a member of y^e householde who had not a dumb pet of some sort. "I encourage

the taste in them," he sayd, " not onlie because it fosters humanitie and affords harmless recreation, but because it promotes habitts of forethought and regularitie. No child or servant of mine hath liberty to adopt a pet which he is too lazy or nice to attend to himself. A little management may enable even a young gentlewoman to do this, without soyling her hands ; and to neglect giving them proper food at proper times entayls a disgrace of which everie one of 'em w^d be ashamed. But, hark ! there is the vesper-bell."

As we passed under a pear-tree, Erasmus told us, with much drollerie, of a piece of boyish mischief of his—the theft of some pears off a particular tree, the fruit of which the superior of his convent had meant to reserve to himself. One morning, Erasmus had climbed the tree, and was feasting to his great content, when he was aware of the superior approaching to catch him in y^e fact ; soe, quicklie slid down to the ground, and made off in y^e opposite direction, limping as he went. The malice of this act consisted in its being the counterfeit of the gait of a poor lame lay brother, wh was, in fact, smartlie punisht for Erasmus his misdeede. Our friend mentioned this with a kinde of remorse, and observed to my father, " Men laugh at the sins of young people and little chil-

dren, as if they were little sins; albeit, the robbery of an apple or cherry-orchard is as much a breaking of the eighth commandment as the stealing of a leg of mutton from a butcher's stall, and oftentimes with far less excuse. Our Church tells us, indeede, of venial sins, such as the theft of an apple or a pin; but, I think" (looking hard at Cecilie and Jack), "even the youngest among us could tell how much sin and sorrow was brought into the world by stealing an apple."

At bedtime, Bess and I did agree in wishing that alle learned men were as apt to unite pleasure with profit in theire talk as Erasmus. There be some that can write after y^e fashion of Paul, and others preach like unto Apollos; but this, methinketh, is scattering seed by the wayside, like the great Sower.

'Tis singular, the love that Jack and Cecy have for one another; it resembleth that of twins. Jack is not forward at his booke; on y^e other hand, he hath a resolution of character which Cecy altogether wants. Last night, when Erasmus spake of children's sins, I observed her squeeze Jack's hand with alle her mighte. I know what she was

thinking of. Having bothe beene forbidden to approach a favorite part of y^e river bank which had given way from too much use, one or y^e other of 'em transgressed, as was proven by y^e smalle footprints in y^e mud, as well as by a nosegay of flowers, that grow not, save by the river; to wit, purple loosestrife, cream-and-codlins, scorpion-grass, water plantain, and the like. Neither of them would confesse, and Jack was, therefore, sentenced to be whipt. As he walked off with Mr. Drew, I observed Cecy turn soe pale, that I whispered father I was certayn she was guilty. He made answer, "Never mind, we cannot beat a girl, and 'twill answer y^e same purpose; in flogging him we flog both." Jack bore the first stripe or two, I suppose, well enow, but at lengthe we hearde him cry out, on which Cecy coulde not forbear to do y^e same, and then stopt bothe her ears. I expected everie moment to hear her say, "Father, 'twas I;" but no, she had not courage for that; onlie, when Jack came forthe all smirked with tears, she put her arm about his neck, and they walked off together into the nuttury. Since that hour, she hath beene more devoted to him than ever, if possible; and, he, boy-like, finds satisfaction in making her his little slave. But the beauty lay in my father's improvement of y^e circumstance. Taking Cecy on his knee that

evening (for she was not ostensible in disgrace), he beganne to talk of atonement and mediation for sin, and who it was that bare our sins for us on the tree. 'Tis thus he turns y° daylie accidents of our quiet lives into lessons of deepe import, not pedanticallie delivered, ex-cathedrâ, but welling forthe from a full and fresh mind.

This morn I had risen before dawn, being minded to meditate on sundrie matters before Bess was up and doing, she being given to much talk during her dressing, and made my way to y° pavillion, where me thought, I s^d be quiet enow; but beholde! father and Erasmus were there before me, in fluent and earnest discourse. I w^d have withdrawne, but father, without interrupting his sentence, puts his arm rounde me and draweth me to him, soe there I sit, my head on 's shoulder, and mine eyes on Erasmus his face.

From much they spake, and other much I guessed, they had been conversing on y° present state of y° Church, and how much it needed renovation.

Erasmus sayd, y° vices of y° Clergy and ignorance of y° vulgar had now come to a poynt, at the which, a remedie must be founde, or y° whole fabric w^d falle to pieces.

—Sayd, the revival of learning seemed appoynted

by heaven for some greate purpose, 'twas difficulte to say how greate.

—Spake of y° new art of printing, and its possible consequents.

—Of y° active and fertile minds at present turning up new ground and ferreting out old abuses.

—Of the abuse of monachism, and of y° evil lives of conventualls. In special, of y° fanaticism and hypocrisie of y° Dominicans.

Considered y° evills of y° times such, as that societie must shortlie, by a vigorous effort, shake 'em off.

Wondered at y° patience of the laitie for soe manie generations, but thoughte 'em now waking from their sleepe. The people had of late beganne to know their physickall power, and to chafe at y° weighte of their yoke.

Thoughte the doctrine of indulgences altogether bad and false.

Father sayd that y° graduallie increast severitie of Church discipline concerning minor offences had become such as to render indulgences y° needfulle remedie for burdens too heavie to be borne.—Condemned a Draconic code, that visited even sins of discipline with y° extream penaltie.—Quoted how ill such excessive severitie answered in our owne land, with regard to y° oivill law ; twenty thieves

oft hanging together on y° same gibbet, yet robberie noe whit abated. Othermuch to same purport, y° which, if alle set downe, woulde too soone fill my libellus. At length, unwillinglie brake off, when the bell rang us to matins.

At breakfaste, William and Rupert were erneste with my father to let 'em row him to Westminister which he was disinclined to, as he was for more speed, and had promised Erasmus an earlie caste to Lambeth; howbeit, he consented that they s^d pull us up to Putney in y° evening, and William s^d have y° stroke-oar. Erasmus sayd, he must thank y° archbishop for his present of a horse; "tho' I'm full faine," he observed, "to believe it a changeling. He is idle and gluttonish, as thin as a wasp, and as ugly as sin. Such a horse, and such a rider!

In the evening, Will and Rupert made 'emselves spruce enow, with nose-gays and ribbons and we tooke water bravelie—John Harris in y° stern, playing the recorder. We had the six-oared barge; and when Rupert Allington was tired of pulling, Mr. Clement tooke his oar; and when *he* wearied, John Harris gave over playing y° pipe; but William and Mr. Gunnel never flagged.

Erasmus was full of his visitt to y° archbishop, who, as usual, I think, had given him some money.

“We sate down two hundred to table,” sayeth he; “there were fish, flesh, and fowl; but Wareham onlie played with his knife, and drank noe wine. He was very cheerfulle and accessible; he knows not what pride is; and yet, of how much mighte he be proude! What genus! what erudition! what kindnesse and modesty? From Wareham who ever departed in sorrow?”

Landing at Fulham, we had a brave ramble thro’ y^e medows. Erasmus noting y^e poor children a gathering y^e dandelion and milke-thistle for the herb-market, was avised to speak of forayn herbs and their uses, bothe for food and medicine.

“For me,” says father, “there is manie a plant I entertayn in my garden and paddock which y^e fastidious woulde cast forthe. I like to teache my children y^e uses of common things—to know for instance, y^e uses of y^e flowers and weeds that grow in our fields and hedges. Manie a poor knave’s pottage woulde be improved, if he were skilled in y^e properties of y^e burdock and purple orchis, lady’s smock, brooklime, and old man’s pepper. The roots of wild succory and water arrow-head mighte agreeable change his Lenten diet; and glasswort afford him a pickle for his mouthfulle of salt-meat. Then there are cresses and wood-sorrel to his breakfast, and salep for his hot evening mess. For his

medicine, there is herb-twopence, that will cure a hundred illis ; camomile, to lull a raging tooth ; and the juice of buttercup to cleare his head by sneezing, Vervain cureth ague ; and crowfoot affords y° leaste painfull of blisters. St. Anthony's turnip is an emetic ; goosegrass sweetens the blood ; woodruffe is good for the liver ; and bind-weed hath nigh as much virtue as y° forayn scammony. Pimpernel promoteth laughter ; and poppy sleep : thyme giveth pleasant dreamis ; and an ashen branch drives evil spirits from y° pillow. As for rosemarie, I lett it run alle over my garden walls, not onlie because my bees love it, but because 'tis the herb sacred to remembrance, and, therefore, to friendship, whence a sprig of it hath a dumb language that maketh y° chosen emblem at our funeral wakes, and in our buriall grounds. Howbeit, I am a schoolboy prating in presence of his master, for here is John Clement at my elbow, who is the best botanist and herbalist of us all."

—Returnjng home, y° youths being warmed with rowing, and in high spiritts, did entertayn themselves and us with manie jests and playings upon words, some of 'em forced enow, yet provocative of laughing. Afterwards, Mr. Gunnel proposed enigmas and curious questions. Among others, he woulde know which of y° famous women of Greece

or Rome we maidens w^d resemble. Bess was for Cornelia, Daisy for Clelia, but I for Damo, daughter of Pythagoras, which William Roper deemed stupid enow, and thoughte I mighte have found as good a daughter, that had not died a maid. Sayth Erasmus, with his sweet, inexpressible smile, "Now, I will tell you, lads and lassies, what manner of man *I* w^d be, if I were not Erasmus. I woulde step back some few years of my life, and be half-way 'twixt thirty and forty; I would be pious and profounde enow for y^e church, albeit noe churchman; I woulde have a blythe, stirring, English wife, and half-a-dozen merrie girls and boys, an English homestead, neither hall nor farm, but between both; but neare enow to y^e citie for convenience, but away from its noise. I woulde have a profession, that gave me some hours daylie of regular businesse, that s^d let men know my parts and court me into publick station, for which my taste made me rather withdrawe. I would have such a private independence, as s^d enable me to give and lend, rather than beg and borrow. I woulde encourage mirthe without buffoonerie, ease without negligence; my habitt and table shoulde be simple, and for my looks I woulde be neither tall nor short, fat nor lean, rubicund nor sallow, but of a fayr skin with blue eyes, brownish beard,

and a countenance engaging and attractive, soe that alle of my companie coulde not choose but love me."

"Why then you woulde be father himselfe," cried Cecy, clasping his arm in bothe her hands with a kind of rapture, and, indeede, y^e portraiture was soe like, we coulde not but smile at y^e resemblance.

Arrived at y^e landing, father protested he was wearie with his ramble, and, his foot slipping, he wrenched his ankle, and sate for an instante on a barrow, the which one of y^e men had left with his garden tools, and before he c^d rise or cry out, William, laughing, rolled him up to y^e house-door; which, considering father's weight, was much for a stripling to doe. Father sayd the same, and, laying his hand on Will's shoulder with kindnesse, cried, "Bless thee, my boy. but I woulde not have thee overstrayned, like Biton and Clitobus."

This morn, hinting to Bess that she was lacing herselfe too straightlie, she brisklie replied, "One w^d think 'twere as great meritt to have a thick waiste as to be one of y^e earlie Christians!"

These humourous retorts are ever at her tongue's

end; and, albeit, as Jacky one day angrily remarked, when she had beene teasing him, "Bess, thy witt is stupidnesse;" yet, for one who talks soe much at random, no one can be more keene when she chooseth. Father sayd of her, half fondly, half apologeticallie to Erasmus, "Her wit has a fine subtletie that eludes you almoste before you have time to recognize it for what it really is." To which, Erasmus readilie assented, adding, that it had y^e rare meritt of playing less on persons than things, and never on bodilie defects.

Hum!—I wonder if they ever sayd as much in favour of me. I know, indeede, Erasmus calls me a forward girl. Alas! that may be taken in two senses.

Grievous work, overnichte, with y^e churning. Nought w^d persuade Gillian but that y^e creame was bewitched by Gammer Gurney, who was dissatisfyde last Friday with her dole, and hobbled away mumping and cursing. At alle events, y^e butter w^d not come; but mother was resolute not to have soe much goode creame wasted; soe sent for Bess and me, Daisy and Mercy Giggs, and insisted on our churning in turn till y^e butter

came, if we sate up all nighte for't. 'Twas a hard saying; and mighte have hampered her like as Jephtha his rash vow: howbeit, soe soone as she had left us, we turned it into a froliok, and sang Chevy Chase from end to end, to beguile time; ne'erthelesse, the butter w^d not come; soe then we grew sober, and, at y^o instance of sweete Mercy, chaunted y^o 119th Psalme; and, by the time we had attayned to "Lucerna pedibus," I heard y^o buttermilk separating and splashing in righte earnest. 'Twas neare midnichte, however; and Daisy had fallen asleep on y^o dresser. Gillian will ne'er be convinced but that our Latin brake the spell.

Erasmus went to Richmond this morning with Polus (for so he Latinizes Reginald Pole, after his uspal fashion), and some other of his friends. On his return, he made us laugh at y^o following. They had clomb y^o hill, and were admiring y^o prospect, when Pole, casting his eyes aloft, and beginning to make sundrie gesticulations, exclaimed, "What is it I beholde? May heaven avert y^o omen!" with suchlike exclamations, which raised y^o curiositie of alle. "Don't you beholde," cries he, "that enormous dragon flying through y^o sky? his horns of fire? his curly tail?"

“No,” says Erasmus, “nothing like it. The sky is as cleare as unwritten paper.”

Howbeit, he continued to affirme and to stare, untill at lengthe, one after another, by dint of straying their eyes and their imaginations, did admitt, first, that they saw something; nexte that it mighte be a dragon; and last, that it was. Of course, on their passage homeward, they c^d talk of little else—some made serious reflections; others, philosophicall speculations; and Pole waggishly triumphed in having beene y^o firste to discerne the spectacle.

“And you trulie believe there was a signe in y^o heavens?” we inquired of Erasmus.

“What know I?” returned he, smiling; “you know, Constantine saw a cross. Why shoulde Polus not see a dragon? We must judge by the event. Perhaps its mission may be to fly away with *him*. He swore to y^o curly tail.”

How difficult it is to discerne y^o supernatural from y^o incredible! We laughe at Gillian’s faith in our Latin; Erasmus laughs at Polus his dragon. Have we a righte to believe noughte but what we can see or prove? Nay, that will never doe. Father says a capacitie for reasoning increaseth a capacitie for believing. He believes there is such a thing as witchcraft, though not that poore olde

Gammer Gurney is a witch ; he believes that saints can work miracles, though not in alle y° marvels reported of y° Canterbury shrine.

Had I beene justice of y° peace, like y° king's grandmother, I w^d have been very jealous of accusations of witchcraft ; and have taken infinite payns to sift out y° causes of malice, jealousy, &c., which mighte have wroughte with y° poore olde women's enemies. Holie Writ sayth, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live ;" but, questionlesse, manie have suffered hurte that were noe witches ; and for my part, I have alwaies helde ducking to be a very uncertayn as well as very cruel teste.

I cannot help smiling, whenever I think of my rencounter with William this morning. Mr. Gunnel had sent me Homer's tiresome list of ships ; all because of y° excessive heate within doors, I took my book into y° nuttery, to be beyonde y° wrath of far-darting Phcebus Apollo, where I clomb into my favourite filbert seat. Anon comes William through y° trees without seeing me ; and seats him at the foot of my filbert ; then, out with his tablets, and, in a posture I s^d have called studied, had he known anie one within sighte, falls a poetizing, I question not. Having noe mind to be interrupted, I lett him be, thinking he w^d soon ex-

haust y° vein ; but a caterpillar dropping from y° leaves on to my page, I was fayn for mirthe sake, to shake it down on his tablets. As ill luck w^d have it, however, y° little reptile onlie fell among his curls ; which soe took me at vantage, that I could not helpe hastilie crying, “ I beg your pardon.” ’Twas worth a world to see his start ! “ What !” cries he, looking up, “ are there indeede Hamadryads ?” and would have gallanted a little, but I bade him hold down his head, while that with a twig I switched off y° caterpillar. Neither could forbear laughing ; and then he sued me to step downe, but I was minded to abide where I was. Howbeit, after a minute’s pause, he sayd, in a grave, kind tone, “ Come, little wife ;” and taking mine arm steadilie in his hand, I lost my balance and was faine to come down whether or noe. We walked for some time, *juxta fluvium* ; and he talked not badlie of his travels, inasmuch as I found there was really more in him than one w^d think.

—Was there ever anie-thing soe perverse, unluckie, and downright disagreeable ? We hurried our afternoone tasks, to go on y° water with my

father; and, meaning to give Mr. Gunnel my Latin traduction, which is in a book like unto this, I never knew he had my journalle instead, untill that he burst out a laughing. "Soe this is y^e famous *libellus*," quoth he, . . . I never waited for another word, but snatcht it out of his hand; which he, for soe strict a man, bore well enow. I do not believe he c^d have read a dozen lines, and they were towards y^e beginning; but I s^d hugelie like to know which dozen lines they were.

Hum! I have a mind never to write another word. That will be punishing myselfe, though, insteade of Gunnel. And he bade me not take it to heart like y^e late Bishop of Durham, to whom a like accident befel, which soe annoyed him that he died of chagrin. I will never again, howbeit, write anie-thing savouring ever soe little of levitie or absurditie. The saints keepe me to it! And, to know it from my exercise book, I will hence-forthe bind a blue ribbon round it. Furthermore, I will knit y^e sayd ribbon in soe close a knot, that it shall be worth noe one else's payns, to pick it out. Lastlie, and for entiere securitie, I will carry the same in my pouch, which will hold bigger matters than this.

This daye, at dinner, Mr. Clement took y^e Pistoller's place at y^e reading-desk ; and insteade of continuing y^e subject in hand, read a paraphrase of y^e 103d Psalm ; y^e faithfullnesse and elegant turne of which, Erasmus highlie commended, though he took exceptions to y^e phrase "renewing thy youth like that of y^e Phœnix," whose fabulous story he believed to have been unknown to y^e Psalmist, and, therefore, however poetically, was unfitt to be introduced. A deepe blush on sweet Mercy's face ledd to y^e detection of y^e paraphrast, and drew on her some deserved commendations. Erasmus, turning to my father, exclaymed with animation, "I woulde call this house the academy of Plato, were it not injustice to compare it to a place where the usuall disputations concerning figures and numbers were onlie occasionallie intersperst with disquisitions concerning y^e moral virtues." Then, in a graver mood, he added, "One mighte envie you, but that your precious privileges are bound up with soe paynfull anxieties. How manie pledges have you given to fortune !"

"If my children are to die out of y^e course of nature, before their parents," father firmly replied, "I w^d rather they died well-instructed than ignorant."

“ You remind me,” rejoyns Erasmus, “ of Phocion ; whose wife, when he was aboute to drinke y^e fatal cup, exclaimed, ‘ Ah, my husband ! you die innocent.’ ‘ And woulde you, my wife,’ he returned, ‘ have me die guilty ? ’ ”

Awhile after, Gonellus askt leave to see Erasmus his signet-ring, which he handed down to him. In passing it back, William, who was occupye in carving a crane, handed it soe negligentlie that it felle to y^e ground. I never saw such a face as Erasmus made, when ’twas picked out from y^e rushes ! And yet, ours are renewed almoste daylie, which manie think over nice. He took it gingerlie in his faire, womanlike hands, and washed and wiped it before he put it on ; which escaped not my step-mother’s displeased notice. Indeede, these Dutchmen are scrupulouslie cleane, though mother calls ’em swinish, because they will eat raw sallets ; though, for that matter, father loves oresses and ramps. She alsoe mislikes Erasmus for eating cheese and butter together with his manchet ; or what he calls *boetram* ; and for being, generallie, daintie at his sizes, which she sayth is an ill example to soe manie young people, and becometh not one with soe little money in’s purse : howbeit, I think ’tis not nicotie, but a weak stomach, which makes him loathe our

salt-meat commons from Michaelmasse to Easter, and eschew fish of y^e coarser sort. He cannot breakfast on colde milk like father, but liketh furmity a little spiced. At dinner, he pecks at, rather than eats, ruffs and reeves, lapwings, or anie smalle birds it may chance; but affects sweets and subtilties, and loves a cup of wine or ale, stirred with rosemary. Father never toucheth the wine-cup but to grace a guest, and loves water from the spring. We growing girls eat more than either; and father says he loves to see us slice away at the cob-loaf; it does him goode. What a kind father he is! I wish my step-mother were as kind. I hate alle sneaping and snubbing, flowting, fleering, pinching, nipping, and such-like; it onlie creates resentment insteade of penitence, and lowers y^e minde of either partie. Gillian throws a rolling-pin at y^e turnspit's head, and we call it low-life; but we look for such unmannerlinesse in the kitchen. A whip is onlie fit for Tisiphone.

As we rose from table, I noted Argus pearcht on y^e window-sill, eagerlie watchng for his dinner, which he looketh for as punctuallie as if he c^d tell the diall; and to please the good, patient bird, till the scullion broughte him his mess of garden-stuff, I fetched him some pulse, which he took from mine hand, taking good heede not to hurt me with

his sharpe beak. While I was feeding him, Erasmus came up, and asked me concerning Mercy Giggs; and I tolde him how that she was a friendlesse orphan, to whom deare father afforded protection and the run of y^e house; and tolde him of her gratitude, her meekness, her patience, her docilitie, her aptitude for alle goode works and almsdeeds; and how, in her little chamber, she improved eache spare moment in y^e way of studdy and prayer. He repeated "Friendlesse? she cannot be called friendlesse, who hath More for her protector, and his children for companions;" and then woulde heare more of her parents' sad story. Alsoe, would hear somewhat of Rupert Allington, and how father gained his law-suit. Alsoe, of Daisy, whose name he tooke to be y^e true abbreviation for Margaret, but I tolde him how that my step-sister, and Mercy, and I, being all three of a name, and I being alwaies called Meg, we had in sport given one the significative of her characteristic virtue, and the other that of y^e French Marguerite, which may indeed be rendered either pearl or daisy. And Chaucer, speaking of our English daisy, saith

"Si douce est la Marguerite."

Since y° little wisdom I have capacitie to acquire, soe oft gives me y° headache to distraction, I marvel not at Jupiter's payn in his head, when the goddess of wisdom sprang therefrom full growne.

This morn, to quiet y° payn brought on by too busie application, Mr. Gunnel would have me close my book and ramble forth with Cecy into y° fields. We strolled towards Walham Greene; and she was seeking for shepherd's purses and shepherd's needles, when she came running back to me, looking rather pale. I askt what had scared her, and she made answer that Gammer Gurney was coming along y° hedge. I bade her set aside her fears; and anon we come up with Gammer, who was pulling at y° purple blossoms of y° deadly nightshade. I sayd, "Gammer, to what purpose gather that weed? knowest not 'tis evill?"

She sayth, mumbling, "What God hath created, that call thou not evill."

"Well, but," quo' I, "'tis poison."

"Aye, and medicine, too," returns Gammer, "I wonder what we poor souls might come to, if we tooke nowt for our ails and aches but what we could buy o' the potticary. We've got noe Dr. Clement, we poor folks, to be our leech o' the household."

“But hast no feare,” quo’ I, “of an overdose?”

“There’s manie a doctor,” sayth she, with an unpleasant leer, “that hath given that at first. In time he gets his hand in; and I’ve had plenty o’ practice—thanks to self and sister.”

“I knew not,” quoth I, “that thou hadst a sister.”

“How should ye, mistress,” returns she, shortly, “when ye never comes nigh us? We’ve grubbed on together this many a year.”

“’Tis soe far,” I returned, half ashamed.

“Why, soe it be,” answers Gammer; “far from neighbours, far from church, and far from priest; howbeit, my old legs carries me to *your* house o’ Fridays; but I know not whether I shall e’er come agayn—the rye bread was soe hard last time; it may serve for young teeth, and for them as has got none; but mine, you see, are onlie on the *goe*,” and she opened her mouth with a ghastly smile. “’Tis not,” she added, “that I’m ungratefulle; but thou sees, mistress, I really *can’t* eat crusts.”

After a moment, I asked, “Where lies your dwelling?”

“Out by yonder,” quoth she, pointing to a shapeless mass of the field. “There bides poor Joan and I. Wilt

come and looke within, mistress, and see how a Christian can die?"

I mutelie complied, in spite of Cecy's pulling at my skirts. Arrived at y wretched abode, which had a hole for its chimney, and another for door at once and window, I found, sitting in a corner, propped on a heap of rushes, dried leaves, and olde rags, an aged siok woman, who seemed to have but a little while to live. A mug of water stode within her reach; I saw none other sustenance; but, in her visage, oh, such peace! . . . Whispers Gammer now with an awfulle look, "She sees 'em now!"

"Sees who?" quoth I.

"Why, angels in two long rows, afore y^e throne of God, a bending of themselves, this way, with their faces to th' earth, and arms stretched out afore 'em."

"Hath she seen a priest?" quoth I.

"Lord love ye," returns Gammer, "what coulde a priest doe for her? She's in heaven alreadie. I doubte if she can heare me." And then, in a loud, distinct voyce, quite free from her usuall mumping, she beganne to recite in *English*, "Blessed is every one that feareth y^e Lord, and walketh in his ways," etc.; which y^e dying woman hearde, although alreadie speechlesse; and

reaching out her feeble arm unto her sister's neck, she dragged it down till their faces touched; and then, looking up, pointed at somewhat she aimed to make her see . . . and we alle looked up, but saw noughte. Howbeit, she pointed up three severall times, and lay, as it were, transfigured before us, a gazing at some transporting sighte, and ever and anon turning on her sister looks of love; and, the while we stoode thus agaze, her spiritt passed away without even a thrill or a shudder. Cecy and I beganne to weepe; and, after a while, soe did Gammer; then, putting us forthe, she sayd, "Goe, children, goe; 'tis noe goode crying; and yet I'm thankfulle to ye for your teares."

I sayd, "Is there aught we can doe for thee?"

She made answer, "Perhaps you can give me tuppence, mistress, to lay on her poor eyelids and keep 'em down. Bless 'ee, bless 'ee! You're like y^e good Samaritan—he pulled out two-pence. And maybe, if I come to 'ee to-morrow, you'll give me a lapfulle of rosemarie, to lay on her poor corpse . . . I know you've plenty. God be with 'ee, children; and be sure ye mind how a Christian can die."

Soe we left, and came home sober enow. Cecy sayth, "To die is not soe fearfulle, Meg, as I

thoughte, but shoulde *you* fancy dying without a priest? I shoulde not; and yet Gammer sayd she wanted not one. Howbeit, for certayn, Gammer Gurney is noe witch, or she woulde not so prayse God."

To conclude, father, on hearing alle, hath given Gammer more than enow for her present needes; and Cecy and I are y^e almoners of his mercy.

June 24.

Yesternighte, being St. John's Eve, we went into town to see y^e mustering of y^e watch. Mr. Rastall had secured us a window opposite y^e King's Head, in Chepe, where theire M^r. went in state to see the show. The streets were a marvell to see, being like unto a continuation of fayr bowres or arbours, garlanded across and over y^e doors with greene birch, long fennel, orpin, St. John's wort, white lilies, and such like; with innumerable candles intersperst, the which, being lit up as soon as 'twas dusk, made the whole look like enchanted land; while at y^e same time, the leaping over bon-fires commenced, and produced shouts of laughter. The youths woulde have father goe downe and joyn 'em; Rupert, speciallie, begged him hard, but he put him off with, "Sirrah, you

goosecap, dost think 'twoulde befit y^e Judge of the Sheriffs' Court?"

At length, to y^e sound of trumpets, came marching up Cheapside two thousand of the watch, in white fustian, with the City badge; and seven hundred cressett bearers, each with his fellow to supplie him with oyl, and making, with their flaring lights, the night as cleare as daye. After 'em, the morris-dancers and City waites; the Lord Mayor on horseback, very fine, with his giants and pageants: and the Sheriff and his watch, and *his* giants and pageants. The streets very uproarious on our way back to the barge, but the homeward passage delicious; the night ayre cool; and the stars shining brightly. Father and Erasmus had some astronomick talk; howbeit, methoughte Erasmus less familiar with y^e heavenlie bodies than father is. Afterwards, they spake of y^e King, but not over-freelie, by reason of y^e bargemen overhearing. Thence, to y^e ever-vest question of Martin Luther, of whome Erasmus spake in terms of earneste, yet qualifide prayse.

"If Luther be innocent," quoth he, "I woulde not run him down by a wicked faction; if he be in error, I woulde rather have him reclaymed than destroyed; for this is most agreeable to the doctrine of our deare Lord and Master, who woulde

not bruise y^e broken reede, nor quenche y^e smoking flax." And much more to same purpose.

We younger folks felle to choosing our favourite mottoes and devices, in which y^e elders at length joyned us. Mother's was loyal—"Cleave to y^e crown though it hang on a bush." Erasmus's pithie—"Festina lente." William sayd he was indebted for his to St. Paul—"I seeke not yours, but you." For me, I quoted one I had seene in an olde countrie church, "Mieux être que paroître," which pleased father and Erasmus much.

Poor Erasmus caughte colde on y^e water last nighte, and keeps house to daye, taking warm possets. 'Tis my week of housekeeping under mother's guidance, and I never had more pleasure in it; delighting to suit his taste in sweete things, which, methinks, all men like. I have enow of time left for studdy, when alle's done.

He hathe beene the best part of the morning in our academia, looking over books and manuscripts, taking notes of some, discoursing with Mr. Gunnel and others; and, in some sorte, interrupting our morning's work; but how pleasantlie! Besides, as father sayth, "varietie is not always in-

terruption. That which occasionallie lets and hinders our accustomed studdies, may prove to y^e ingenious noe less profitable than their studies themselves."

They beganne with discussing y^e pronouciation of Latin and Greek, on which Erasmus differeth much from us, though he holds to our pronouciation of y^e *theta*. Thence, to y^e absurde partie of the Ciceronians now in Italie, who will admit noe author save Tully to be read nor quoted, nor anie word not in his writings to be used. Thence, to y^e Latinitie of y^e Fathers, of whose style he spake slightlie enow, but rated Jerome above Augustine. At length, to his Greek and Latin Testament, of late issued from y^e presse, and y^e incredible labour it hath cost him to make it as perfect as possible: on this subject he soe warmed, that Bess and I listened with suspended breath. "May it please God," sayth he, knitting ferventlie his hands, "to make it a blessing to all Christendom! I look for noe other reward. Scholars and believers yet unborn, may have reason to thank, and yet may forget Erasmus." He then went on to explain to Gunnel what he had much felt in want of, and hoped some scholar might yet undertake; to wit, a sort of Index Bibliorum, showing in how manie passages of holy writ occurreth anie given word,

etc.; and he e'en proposed it to Gunnel, saying 'twas onlie y^e work of patience and industry, and mighte be layd aside, and resumed as occasion offered, and completed at leisure, to y^e great thankfullnesse of scholars. But Gunnel onlie smiled and shooke his head. Howbeit, Erasmus set forth his scheme soe playnlie, that I, having a pen in hand, did privilie note down alle y^e heads of y^e same, thinking, if none else w^d undertake it, why s^d not I? since leisure and industrie were alone required, and since 'twoulde be soe acceptable to manie, 'speciallie to Erasmus.

Heard mother say to Barbara, "Be sure the sirloin is well basted for y^e king's physician:" which advised me that Dr. Linacre was expected. In truth, he returned with father in y^e barge; and they took a turn on y^e river bank before sitting down to table; I noted them from my lattice; and anon, father beckoning me, cries, "Child, bring out my favorite Treatyse on Fysshyng, printed by Wynkyn de Worde; I must give the doctor my loved passage."

Joining 'em with y^e book, I found father telling him of y^e roach, dace, chub, barbel, etc., we oft

catch opposite y^e church ; and hastilie turning over y^e leaves, he beginneth with unction to read y^e passage ensuing, which I love to y^e full as much as he :

He observeth, if the angler's sport shoulde fail him, " he at y^e best hathe his holsom walk and mery at his ease, a swete ayre of the swete savour of y^e meade of flowers, that maketh him hungry ; he heareth the melodious harmonie of fowles, he seeth y^e young swans, herons, ducks, cotes, and manie other fowles, with theire broods, which me seemeth better than alle y^e noise of hounds, faukners, and fowlers can make. And if the angler take fysshe, then there is noe man merrier than he is in his spryte." And, " Ye shall not use this forsaide crafty disporte for no covetysnesse in the encreasing and sparing of your money onlie, but principallie for your solace, and to cause the health of your bodie, and speciallie of your soule, for when ye purpose to goe on your disportes of fysshynge, ye will not desire greatlie manie persons with you, which woulde lett you of your game. And thenne ye may serve God devoutlie, in saying affectuouslie your customable prayer ; and thus doing, ye shall eschew and voyd manie vices."

" Angeling is itselfe a vice," cries Erasmus from y^e threshold ; " for my part I will fish none, save and except for pickled oysters."

“In the regions below,” answers father; and then laughingly tells Linacre of his first dialogue with Erasmus, who had been feasting in my Lord Mayor’s cellar:—“ ‘ Whence come you ? ’ ‘ From below.’ ‘ What were they about there ? ’ ‘ Eating live oysters, and drinking out of leather jacks.’ ‘ Either you are Erasmus,’ etc. ‘ Either you are More or nothing.’ ”

“ ‘ Neither more nor less,’ you should have rejoined,” sayth the doctor.

“ How I wish I had,” says father; “ don’t torment me with a jest I might have made and did not make; ’speciallie to put downe Erasmus.”

“ Concedo nulli,” sayth Erasmus.

“ Why are you so lazy ? ” asks Linacre; “ I am sure you can speak English if you will.”

“ Soe far from it,” sayth Erasmus, “ that I made my capacitie an excuse for declining an English rectory. Albeit, you know how Wareham requited me; saying in his kind, generous way, I served the Church more by my pen than I could by preaching sermons in a cuntry village.”

Sayth Linacre, “ The archbishop hath made another remark, as much to y^e purpose: to wit, that he has received from you the immortalitie which emperors and kings cannot bestow.”

“ They cannot even bid a smoking sirloin retain

its heat an hour after it hath left the fire," sayth father. "Tilly-vally! as my good Alice says,—let us remember the universal doom, 'fruges consumere nati,' and philosophize over our ale and bracket."

"Not Cambridge ale, neither," sayth Erasmus.

"Will you never forget that unlucky beverage?" sayth father. "Why, man, think how manie poore scholars there be, that content themselves, as I have hearde one of St. John's declare, with a penny piece of beef amongst four, stewed into pottage with a little salt and oatmeal; and that after fasting from four o'clock in the morning! Say grace for us this daye, Erasmus, with good heart."

At table, discourse flowed soe thicke and faste that I mighte aim in vayn to chronicle it—and why should I? dwelling as I doe at y^e fountayn head? Onlie that I find pleasure, alreadie, in glancing over the foregoing pages whensoever they concern father and Erasmus, and wish they were more faithfullie recalled and better writ. One thing sticks by me,—a funny reply of father's to a man who owed him money and who put him off with "Memento Morieris?" "I bid you," retorted father, "Memento Mori Æris, and I wish you woulde take as goode care to provide for y^e one as I do for the other."

Linacre laughed much at this, and said,—“That was real wit; a spark struck at the moment; and with noe ill-nature in it, for I am sure your debtor could not help laughing.”

“Not he,” quoth Erasmus. “More’s drollerie is like that of a young gentlewoman of his name, which shines without burning.” and, oddlie enow, he looked across at *me*. I am sure he meant Bess.

Father brought home a strange gieste to-daye, —a converted Jew, with grizzlie beard, furred gown, and eyes that shone like lamps lit in dark cavernes. He had beene to Benmarine and Tremeçen, to y° Holie Citie, and to Damascus, to Urmia and Assyria, and I think alle over y° knowne world; and tolde us manie strange tales, one hardlie knew how to believe; as, for example, of a sea-coast tribe, called y° Balouches, who live on fish and build their dwellings of the bones. Alsoe, of a race of his countriemen beyond Euphrates who believe in Christ, but know nothing of y° Pope; and of whom were y° Magians y° followed y° Star. This agreeth not with our legend. He averred that, though soe far apart from their brethren, their speech was y° same, and even their songs; and he sang or chaunted one which he sayd was common among y° Jews alle over y° world, and had beene

so ever since theire citie was ruinated and y° people captivated, and yet it was never sett down by note. Erasmus, who knows little or nought of Hebrew, listened to y° words with curiositie, and made him repeate them twice or thrice : and though I know not y° character, it seemed to me they sounded thus :—

Adir Hu yivne bethcha beaccaro,
El, b'ne ; El b'ne ; El b'ne ;
Bethcha beaccaro.

Though Christianish, he woulde not eat pig's face ; and sayd swine's flesh was forbidden by y° Hebrew law far its unwholesomenesse in hot countries and hot weather, rather than by way of arbitrarie prohibition. Daisy took a great dislike to this man, and would not sit next him.

In the hay-field alle y° evening. Swathed father in a hay-rope, and made him pay y° fine, which he pretended to resist. Cecy was just about to cast one round Erasmus, when her heart failed and she ran away, coloring to y° eyes. He sayd he never saw such pretty shame. Father reclining on y° hay with head on my lap and his eyes shut, Bess asked if he were asleep. He made answer, “ Yes, and dreaming.” I askt, “ of what ? ” “ Of a far-off future daye, Meg ; when thou and I shall looke

back on this hour, and this hay-field, and my head on thy lap."

"Nay, but what a stupid dream, Mr. More," says mother. "Why, what woulde *you* dream of, Mrs. Alice?" "Forsooth, if I dreamed at alle, when I was wide awake, it should be of being Lord Chancellor at y^e leaste." "Well, wife, I forgive thee for not saying at the *most*. Lord Chancellor quotha! And you woulde be Dame Alice, I trow, and ride in a whirlecote, and keep a Spanish jennet, and a couple of grayhounds, and wear a train before and behind, and carry a jersalcon on your fist." "On my wrist." "No, that's not such a pretty word as t'other! Go to, go!"

Straying from y^e others, to a remote corner of the meadow, or ever I was aware, I came close upon Gammér Gurney, holding somewhat with much care. Give ye good den, Mistress Meg," quoth she, "I cannot abear to rob y^e birds of their nests; but I knows you and yours be kind to dumb creatures, soe here's a nest o' young owzels for ye—and I can't tell 'em dumb nowther, for they'll sing bravelie some o' these days." "How hast fared, of late, Gammér?" quoth I. "Why, well enow for such as I," she made answer; "since I lost y^e use o' my right hand, I can nowther spin, nor nurse sick folk, but I pulls rushes, and that brings me a

few pence, and I be a good herbalist ; and, because I says one or two English prayers, and hates y^e priests, some folks think me a witch." "But why dost hate y^e priests?" quoth I. "Never you mind," she gave answer, "I've reasons manie ; and for my English prayers, they were taught me by a gentleman I nursed, that's now a saint in heaven, along with poor Joan."

And soe she hobbled off, and I felt kindlie towards her, I scarce knew why—perhaps, because she spake soe lovingly of her dead sister, and because of that sister's name. *My* mother's name was Joan.

Erasmus is gone. His last saying to father was, "They will have you at court yet;" and father's answer, "When Plato's year comes round."

To me he gave a copy, how precious! of his Testament. "You are an elegant Latinist, Margaret," he was pleased to say, "but, if you woulde drink deeplie of y^e well-springs of wisdom, applie to Greek. The Latins have onlie shallow rivulets ; the Greeks, copious rivers, running over sands of gold. Read Plato ; he wrote on marble, with a diamond ; but above alle, read y^e New Testament. 'Tis the key to the kingdom of heaven."

To Mr. Gunnel, he said, smiling, "Have a care of thyself, dear Gonellus, and take a little wine for thy stomach's sake. The wages of most scholars nowadays, are weak eyes, ill-health, an empty purse, and shorte commons. I neede only bid thee beware of the two first."

To Bess, "Farewell, Bessy; thank you for mending my bad Latin. When I write to you, I will be sure to signe myselve 'Roterodamius.' Farewell, sweete Cecil; let me always continue your 'desired amiable.' And you, Jacky,—love your book a little more."

"Jack's deare mother, not content with her girls," sayth father, "was alwaies wishing for a boy, and at last she had one that means to remain a boy alle his life."

"The Dutch schoolmasters thoughte *me* dulle and heavie," sayth Erasmus, "soe there is some hope of Jacky yet." And soe, stepped into y^e barge which we watched to Chelsea Reach. How dulle the house has beene ever since! Rupert and William have had me into y^e pavillion to hear y^e plot of a miracle-play they have alreadie begunne to talk over for Christmase, but it seemed to me downrighte rubbish. Father sleeps in towne to-nighte, soe we shall be stupid enow. Bessy hath undertaken to work father a slipper for his tender

foot; and is happie, tracing for y^e pattern our three moor-cocks and colts; but I am idle and tiresome.

If I had paper, I woulde beginne my projected *opus*; but I dare not ask Gunnel for anie more just yet; nor have any money to buy some. I wish I had a couple of angels. I think I shall write to father for them to-morrow; he alwaies likes to hear from us if he is twenty-four hours absent, providing we conclude not with "I have nothing more to say."

I have writ my letter to father. I almoste wish, now, that I had not sent it.

Rupert and Will still full of their moralitie, which reallie has some fun in it. To ridicule y^e extravagance of those who, as the saying is, carry their farms and fields on their backs. William proposes to come in, all verdant, with a real model of a farm on his back and a windmill on his head.

How sweete, how gracious an answer from

father! John Harris has broughte me with it y^e two angels; less prized than this epistle.

July 10.

Sixteenth birthdaye. Father away, which made it sadde. Mother gave me a payr of blue hosen with silk clocks; Mr. Gunnel, an iverie handled stylus; Bess, a bodkin for my hair; Daisy, a book-mark; Mercy, a saffron cake; Jack, a basket; and Cecil, a nosegay. William's present was fayrest of alle, but I am hurte with him and myselfe; for he offered it soe queerlie and tagged it with such I refused it, and there's an end. 'Twas unmannerlie and unkinde of me, and I've cried about it since.

Father alwaies gives us a birthdaye treat; soe, contrived that mother shoulde take us to see my Lord Cardinal of York goe to Westminster in state. We had a merrie water-party; got goode places and saw the show; crosse-bearers, pillar-bearers, ushers and alle. Himselfe in crimson engrayned sattin, and tippet of sables, with an orange in his hand helde to 's nose, as though y^e common ayr were two vile to breathe. What a pompous priest it is! The archbishop mighte well say, "That man is drunk with too much prosperitie."

Between dinner and supper, we had a fine skirmish in y° straits of Thermopylæ. Mr. Gunnel headed the Persians, and Will was Leonidas, with a swashing buckler, and a helmet a yard high ; but Mr. Gunnel gave him such a rap on the crest that it went over y° wall ; soe then William thought there was nothing left for him but to die. Howbeit, as he had been layd low sooner than he had reckoned on, he prolonged his last agonies a good deal, and gave one of y° Persians a tremendous kick just as they were aboute to rifle his pouch. They therefore thoughte there must be somewhat in it they shoulde like to see ; soe, helde him down in spite of his hitting righte and lefte, and pulled therefrom, among sundrie lesser matters, a carnation knot of mine. Poor varlet, I wish he would not be so stupid. . . .

After supper, mother proposed a concert ; and we were alle singing a rounde, when, looking up, I saw father standing in y° door-way, with such a happy smile on his face ! He was close behind Rupert and Daisy, who were singing from y° same book. and advertised them of his coming by gentlie knocking their heads together ; but I had the firste kiss, even before mother, because of my birthdaye.

It turns out that father's lateness yester-even was caused by press of businesse ; a forayn mission having been proposed to him, which he resisted as long as he could, but was at lengthe reluctantlie induced to accept. Length of his stay uncertayn, which casts a gloom on alle ; but there is soe much to doe as to leave little time to think, and father is busiest of alle ; yet hath founde leisure to concert with mother for us a journey into y^e country, which will occupy some of y^e weeks of his absence. I am full of carefulle thoughts and forebodings, being naturallie of too anxious a disposition. Oh, let me caste alle my cares on another ! Fecisti nos ad te, Domine ; et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te.

'Tis soe manie months agone since that I made an entry in my libellus, as that my motto—" nulla dies sine linea—" hath somewhat of sarcasm in it. How manie things doe I beginne and leave unfinisht ! and yet, less from caprice than lack of strength ; like him of whom y^e scripture was writ—" this man beganne to build and was not able to finish." My *opus*, for instance ; the which my father's prolonged absence in y^e autumn and my winter visitt to aunt

Nan and aunt Fan gave me such leisure to carrie forward. But alack ! leisure was less to seeke than learninge; and when I came back to mine olde taskes, leisure was awanting too; and then by reason of my sleeping in a separate chamber, I was enabled to steale hours from y° earlie morn and hours from y° night, and, like unto Solomon's virtuous woman, my candle went not out. But 'twas not to purpose y° I worked, like y° virtuous woman, for I was following a Jack-o-lantern; having forsooke y° straight path laid downe by Erasmus for a foolish path of mine owne; and soe I toyled and blundered, and puzzled, and was mazed; and then came on that payn in my head. Father sayd, "What makes Meg soe pale!" and I sayd not: and at y° laste, I tolde mother there was somewhat throbbing and twisting in y° back of mine head like unto a little worm that woulde not die; and she made answer, "Ah, a maggot," and soe by her scoff I was shamed. Then I gave over mine opus, but y° payn did not yet goe; soe then I was longing for y° deare pleasure, and fondlie turning over y° leaves, and wondering woulde father be surprised and pleased with it some daye, when father himself came in or ever I was aware. He sayth, "What hast thou, Meg?" I faltered and would sett it aside. He sayth, "Nay, let me

see ;' and soe takes it from me ; and after y^e first glance throws himself into a seat, his back to me, and firste runs it hastilie through, then beginnes with methode and such silence and gravitie as that I trembled at his side, and felt what it must be to stand a prisoner at the bar, and he y^e judge. Sometimes I thought he must be pleased, at others not : at lengthe, alle my fond hopes were ended by his crying, " This will never doe. Poor wretch, hath this then beene thy toyl ? How couldst find time for soe much labour ? for here hath been trouble enow and to spare. Thou must have stolen it, sweet Meg, ffrom the night, and prevented y^e morning watch. Most dear'st ! thy father's owne loved child ;" and soe, caressing me till I gave over my shame and disappointment.

" I need not to tell thee, Meg," father sayth, " of y^e unprofitable labour of Sisyphus, nor of drawing water in a sieve. There are some things, most deare one, that a woman if she trieth, may doe as well as a man ; and some she can not, and some she had better not. Now, I tell thee firmlie, since y^e first payn is y^e leaste sharpe, that, despite y^e spiritt and genius herein shewn, I am avised 'tis work thou canst not and work thou hadst better not doe. But judge for thyselfe ; if thou wilt persist, thou shalt have leisure and quiet, and

a chamber in my new building, and alle y° help my gallery of books may afford. But thy father says, forbear.”

Soe, what could I say, but “ My father shall never speak to me in vayn !”

Then he gathered y° papers up and sayd, “ Then I shall take temptation out of your way ;” and pressing ’em to his heart as he did soe, sayth, “ They are as deare to me as they can be to you ;” and soe left me, looking out as though I noted (but I noted not), the clear shining Thames. ’Twas twilighte, and I stode there I know not how long, alone and lonely ; with tears coming, I knew not why, into mine eyes. There was a weight in y° ayr, as of coming thunder ; the screaming, ever and anon, of Juno and Argus, inclined me to mellancholie, as it alwaies does : and at length I beganne to note y° moon rising, and y° deepening clearnesse of y° water, and y° lazy motion of y° barges, and y° flashes of light whene’er y° rowers dipt theire oars. And then I beganne to attend to y° cries and different sounds from across y° water, and y° tolling of a distant bell ; and I felle back on mine olde heart-sighinge, “ Fecisti nos ad te, Domine ; et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te.”

Or ever the week was gone, my father had contrived for me another journey to New Hall, to abide

with the lay nuns, as he calleth them, aunt Nan and aunt Fan, whom my step-mother loveth not, but whom I love and whom father loveth. Indeede. 'tis sayd in Essex that at first he inclined to aunt Nan rather than to my mother; but that, perceiving my mother affected his companie and aunt Nan affected it not, he diverted his hesitating affections unto her and took her to wife. Albeit, aunt Nan loveth him dearlie as a sister ought: indeed, she loveth alle, except, methinketh, herself, to whom, alone, she is rigid and severe. How holie are my aunts' lives! Cloistered nuns could not be more pure, and could scarce be as usefulle. Though wise, they can be gay; though noe longer young, they love the young. And their reward is, the young love them; and I am fulle sure, in this world they seeke noe better.

Returned to Chelsea, I spake much in prayse of mine aunts, and of single life. On a certayn evening, we maids were sett at our needles, and samplers on y^e pavillion steps; and, as follie will out, 'gan talk of what we would fayn have to our lots, shoulde a good fairie starte up and grant eache a wish. Daisy was for a countess's degree, with hawks and hounds. Bess was for founding a college, Mercy a hospital, and she spake soe experimentallie of its conditions that I was fayn to

goe partners with her in the same. Cecy commenced "Supposing I was married; if once that I were married"—on which, father, who had come up unperceived, burst out laughing and sayth, "Well, dame Cecily, and what state would you keep?" Howbeit as he and I afterwards paced together, juxta fluvium, he did say, "Mercy hath well propounded the conditions of an hospital or alms-house for aged and sick folk, and 'tis a fantasie of mine to sett even such an one afoot, and give you the conduct of the same."

From this careless speech, dropped as 'twere, by y^e way, hath sprung mine house of refuge! and oh, what pleasure have I derived from it! How good is my father! how the poor bless him! and how kind is he, through them, to me! Laying his hand kindly on my shoulder, this morning he sayd, "Meg, how fares it with thee now? Have I cured the payn in thy head?" Then putting the house-key into mine hand, he laughingly added, "'Tis now yours, my joy, by Livery and Seisin."

Aug. 6.

I wish William w^d give me back my Testament.
'Tis one thing to steal a knot or a posie, and another

to borrow y^e most valuable book in y^e house and keep it week after week. He soughte it with a kind of mysterie, so as that I forbearde to ask it of him in companie, lest I s^d doe him an ill turn ; and yet I have none other occasion.

The emperor, the King of France, and Cardinal Ximenes are all striving which shall have Erasmus and alle in vayn. He hath refused a professor's chayr at Louvain, and a Sicilian bishoprick. E'en thus it was with him when he was here this spring—the Queen w^d have had him for her preceptor, the King and Cardinall prest on him a royall apartment and salarie, Oxford and Cambridge contended for him, but his saying was, "Alle these I value less than my libertie, my studies, and my literarie toyls." How much greater is he than those who woulde confer on him greatness! Noe man of letters hath equall reputation or is soe much courted.

Yestereven, after overlooking the men playing at loggats, father and I strayed away along Thermopylæ into y^e home-field ; and as we sauntered together under the elms, he sayth with a sigh "Jack, is Jack, and no More he will never

be any thing. An' 'twere not for my beloved wenches, I should be an unhappy father. But what though!—My Meg is better unto me then ten sons; and it maketh no difference at harvest time whether our corn were put into the ground by a man or a woman.

While I was turning in my mind what excuse I might make for John, father taketh me at unawares by a sudden change of subject; saying, “Come, tell me, Meg, why canst not affect Will Roper?”

I was a good while silent, at length made answer, “He is so unlike alle I esteem and admire so unlike alle I have been taught to esteem and admire by you.”—

“Have at you,” he returned laughing, “I knew not I had been sharpening weapons agaynst myself. True he is neither Achilles nor Hector, nor even Paris, but yet well enough, meseems, as times go—smarter and comelier than either Heron or Dancey.”

I, faltering made answer, “Good looks effect me but a little—'tis in his better part I feel the want. He can not discourse, for instance, to one's mind and soul, like unto you, dear father, or Erasmus.”

“I should marvel if he could,” returned father gravelie, “thou art mad, my daughter, to look, in

a youth of Will's years, for the mind of a man of forty or fifty. What were Erasmus and I, dost thou suppose, at Will's age? Alas, Meg, I should not like you to know what I was! Men called me the boy-sage, and I know not what, but in my heart and head was a world of sin and folly. Thou mightest as well expect Will to have my hair, eyes, and teeth, alle getting y^e worse for wear, as to have the fruits of my life-long experience, in some cases full dearly bought. Take him for what he is, match him by the young minds of his owne standing: consider how long and closelie we have known him. His parts are, surelie, not amiss: he hath more book-lore than Dancey, more mother wit than Allington."

"But why need I to concern myself about him?" I exclaymed, "Will is very well in his way: why s^d we cross each other's paths? I am young, I have much to learn, I love my studies—why interrupt them with other and lesse wise thoughts?"

"Because nothing can be wise that is not practical," returned father, "and I teach my children philosophie to fitt them for living in y^e world, not above it. One may spend a life in dreaming over Plato, and yet goe out of it without leaving y^e world a whit y^e better for our having made part of it. 'Tis to little purpose we studdy, if it onlie

makes us look for perfections in others which they may in vain seek for in ourselves. It is not even necessary or goode for us to live entirelie with congeniall spiritts. The vigorous tempers the inert, the passionate is evened by the cool-tempered, the prosaic balances the visionarie. Woulde thy mother suit me better, dost thou suppose, if she coulde discuss polemicks like Luther or Melancthon? E'en thine owne sweet mother, Meg, was less affected to study than thou art—she learnt to love it for my sake, but I made her what she was."

And, with a suddain burste of fond recollection, he hid his eyes on my shoulder, and for a moment or soe, cried bitterlie. As for me, I shed, oh! such salt tears!

ENTERING, o' the suddain, into Mercy's chamber, I founde her all be-wept and waped, poring over an old kirtle of mother's she had bidden her re-line with buckram. Could not make out whether she were sick of her task, or had had words with mother, or had some seeret inquietation of her owne; but, as she is a girl of few words, I found I had best leave her alone after a caress and kind saying or two. We alle have our troubles.

. . . . Trulie may I say soe. Here have they

ta'en a fever of some low sorte in my house of refuge, and mother, fearing it may be y^e sicknesse, will not have me goe neare it, lest I s^d bring it home. Mercy, howbeit, hath besought her soe earnestlie to let her goe and nurse y^e sick, that mother hath granted her prayer, on condition she returneth not till y^e fever bates, . . . thus setting her life at lower value than our owne. Deare Mercy ! I woulde fayn be her mate.

We are alle mightie glad that Rupert Allington hath at lengthe zealouslie embraced y^e studdy of the law. 'Twas much to be feared at y^e firste there was noe application in him, and though we all pitied him when father first broughte him home, a pillaged, portionlesse client, with none other to espouse his rightes, yet 'twas a pitie soone allied with contempt when we founde how emptie he was, caring for nought but archerie and skittles and the popinjaye out o' the house, and dicing and tables within, which father w^d on noe excuse permitt. Soe he had to conform, ruefullie enow, and hung piteouslie on hand for awhile. I mind me of Bess's saying, about Christmasse, "Heaven send us open weather while Allington is here ; I

don't believe he is one that will bear shutting up." Howbeit, he seemed to incline towards Daisy, who is handsome enow, and cannot be hindered of two hundred pounds, and so he kept within bounds, and when father got him his cause he was mightilie thankfulle, and would have left us out of hand, but father persuaded him to let his estate recover itself, and turn y° mean time to profit, and, in short, soe wrought on him, that he hath now become a student in right earneste.

Soe we are going to lose not only Mr. Clement, but Mr. Gunnel! How sorrie we alle are! It seemeth he hath long been debating for and agaynst y° church, and at length finds his mind so stronglie set towards it, as he can keep out of it noe longer. Well! we shall lose a good master, and y° church will gayn a good servant. Drew will supplie his place, that is, according to his beste, but our worthy Welshman careth soe little for young people, and is so abstract from y° world about him, that we shall oft feel our loss. Father hath promised Gonellus his interest with y° Cardinal.

I fell into disgrace for holding speech with Mercy

over y° pales, but she is confident there is noe danger ; the sick are doing well, and none of y° whole have fallen sick. She sayth Gammer Gurney is as tender of her as if she were her daughter, and will let her doe noe vile or paynfull office, soe as she hath little to doe but read and pray for y° poor souls, and feed 'em with savourie messes, and they are alle so harmonious and full of cheer, as to be like birds in a nest. Mercy deserves theire blessings more than I. Were I a free agent, she s^d not be alone now, and I hope ne'er to be withheld therefrom agayn.

Busied with my flowers y° chief o' the forenoon, I was fayn to rest in the pavilion, when, entering therein, whōm shoulde I stumble upon but William, layd at length on y° floor, with his arms under his head, and his book on y° ground. I was withdrawing' brisklie enow, when he called out, " Don't goe away, since you *are* here," in a tone soe rough, soe unlike his usual key, as that I paused in a maze, and then saw that his eyes were red. He sprung to his feet and sayd, " Meg, come and talk to me," and, taking my hand in his, stepped quicklie forthe without another word sayd,

till we reached the elm-tree walk. I marvelled to see him soe moven, and expected to hear somewhat that shoulde displease me, scarce knowing what; however, I might have guest at it from then till now, without ever nearing y^e truth. His first words were, "I wish Erasmus had ne'er crost y^e threshold; he has made me very unhappie;" then, seeing me stare, "Be not his council just now, dear Meg, but bind up, if thou canst, the wounds he has made. . . . There be some wounds, thou knowest, though but of a cut finger or the like, that we can not well bind up for ourselves."

I made answer, "I am a young and unskilled leech."

He replied, "But you have a quick wit, and patience, and kindnesse, and, for a woman, are not scant of learning."

"Nay," I sayd, "but Mr. Gunnel—"

"Gunnel would be the last to help me," interrupts Will, "nor can I speak to your father. He is alwaies too busie now . . . besides—"

"Father Francis," I put in.

"Father Francis?" repeats Will, with a shake o' the head and a ruefuelle smile, "dost thou think, Meg, he coulde answer me if I put to him Pilate's question, 'What is truth?'"

"We know alreadie," quoth I.

Sayth Will, "What do we know?"

I paused, then made answer reverentlie, "That Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life."

"Yes," he exclaymed, clapping his hands together in a strange sort of passion; "that we *doe* know, blessed be God, and other foundation can or ought no man to lay than that is layd, which is Jesus Christ. But, Meg, is this the principle of our church?"

"Yea, verily," I steadfastlie replied.

"Then, how has it been overlayd," he hurriedlie went on, "with men's inventions! St. Paul speaks of a sacrifice once offered; we holde the host to be a continuall sacrifice. Holy writ telleth us where a tree falls it must lie; we are taughte that our prayers may free souls from purgatorie. The word sayth, 'by faith ye are saved;' the church sayth we may be saved by our works. It is writen 'The idols he shall utterly abolish;' we worship figures of gold and silver. . ."

"Hold, hold," I sayd, "I dare not listen to this . . . you are wrong, you know you are wrong."

"How and where," he sayth; "onlie tell me. I long to be put righte."

"Our images are but symbols of our saints," I made answer; "tis onlie y^e ignorant and unlearned that worship y^e mere wood and stone."

“ But why worship saints at alle ?” persisted Will ; “ where’s the warrant for it ?”

I sayd, “ Heaven has warranted it by sundrie and speciall miracles at divers times and places. I may say to you, Will, as Socrates to Agathon, ‘ You may easilie argue agaynst me, but you cannot argue agaynst the truth.’ ”

“ Oh, put me not off with Plato,” he impatientlie replied, “ refer me but to holy writ.”

“ How can I,” quoth I, “ when you have ta’en away my Testament ere I had half gone through it ? ’Tis this book, I fear me, poor Will, hath unsettled thee. Our church, indeed, sayth the unlearned wrest it to their destruction.”

“ And yet the apostle sayth,” rejoyned Will, “ that it contayns alle things necessarie to our salvation.”

“ Doubtlesse it doth, if we knew but where to find them,” I replied.

“ And how find, unlesse we seeke ?” he pursued, “ and how know which road to take, when we find the scripture and the church at issue ?”

“ Get some wiser head to advise us,” I rejoyned.

“ But an’ if the obstacle remains the same ?”

“ I cannot suppose that,” I somewhat impatientlie returned, “ God’s word and God’s church

must agree; 'tis only we that make them at issue."

"Ah, Meg, that is just such an answer as Father Francis mighte give—it solves noe difficultie. If, to alle human reason, they pull opposite ways, by which shall we abide? I know; I am certain. '*Tu, Domine Jesu, es justitia mea!*'"

He looked soe rapt, with claspt hands and up-raysed eyes, as that I coulde not but look on him and hear him with solemnitie. At length I sayd, "If you know and are certayn, you have noe longer anie doubts for me to lay, and with your will, we will holde this discourse noe longer, for however moving and however considerable its subject matter may be, it approaches forbidden ground too nearlie for me to feel it safe, and I question whether it savoureth not of heresie. However, Will, I most heartilie pitie you, and will pray for you."

"Do, Meg, do," he replyed, "and say nought to anie one of this matter."

"Indeede I shall not, for I think 'twoulde bring you if not me into trouble, but, since thou hast soughte my counsel, Will, receive it now and take it. . . ."

He sayth, "What is it?"

“To read less, pray more, fast, and use such discipline as our church recommends, and I question not this temptation will depart. Make a fayr triall.”

And soe, away from him, though he woulde fain have sayd more, and I have kept mine owne worde of praying for him full earnestlie, for it pitieth me to see him in such case.

Poor Will, I never see him look grave now, nor heare him sighe, without thinking I know the cause of his secret discontentation. He hath, I believe, followed my council to y^e letter, for though y^e men's quarter of y^e house is soe far aparte from ours, it hath come rounde to me through Barbara, who hath it from her brother, that Mr. Roper hath of late lien on y^e ground, and used a knotted cord. As 'tis one of y^e acts of mercy to relieve others, when we can, from satanic doubts and inquietations, I have been at some payns to make an abstracte of such passages from y^e fathers, and such narratives of noted and undeniable miracles as cannot, I think, but carry conviction with them, and I hope they may minister to his soul's comfort.

Tuesday.

Supped with my Lord Sands. Mother played mumchance with my lady, but father, who saith he woulde rather feast a hundred poor men than eat at one rich man's table, came not in till late, on plea of businesse. My lord tolde him the king had visited him not long agone, and was soe well content with his manor as to wish it were his owne, for the singular fine ayr and pleasant growth of wood. In fine, wound up y^e evening with musick. My lady hath a pair of fine toned clavichords, and a mandoline that stands five feet high; the largest in England, except that of the Lady Mary Dudley. The sound, indeed, is powerfull, but methinketh the instrument ungaynlie for a woman. Lord Sands sang us a new ballad, "The King's Hunt's up," which father affected hugelie. I lacked spiritt to sue my lord for y^e words, he being soe free-spoken as alwaies to dash me; howbeit, I mind they ran somewhat thus. . .

"The hunt is up, the hunt is up,
And it is well-nigh daye.
Harry our King has gone hunting
To bring his deere to baye.
The east is bright with morning lighte,
And darkness it is fled,
And the merrie horn wakes up ye morn

To leave his idle bed.
Beholde ye skies with golden dyes,
Are . . .”

—The rest hath escaped me, albeit I know there was some burden of hey-tantera, where my lord did stamd and snap his fingers. He is a merry heart.

Now that Gunnel is gone, I take to heart that I profited not more by his teaching. Saying to Mercy, overnight, that methought she missed not our good master, she made answer, “Oh yes, I doe; how can I choose but miss him, who taught me to be, to doe, and to suffer?” And this with a light laugh, yet she lookt not merrie.

. . . Writing y^e above, I was interrupted by shrill cries either of woman or boy, as of one in acute payn, and ran forthe of my chamber to learne y^e cause. I met Bess coming hastilie out of y^e garden, looking somewhat pale, and cried, “What is it?” She made answer, “Father is having Dick Halliwell beaten for some evill communication with Jack. ’Tis seldom or never he proceedeth to such extremities, soe the offence must needs have beene something pernicious; and, e’en as ’tis, father is standing by to see he is not smitten overmuch; ne’erthelesse, Giles lays the stripes on with a will.”

It turned me sick. I have somewhat of my

mother in me, who was a tender and delicate woman, that woulde weepe to see a bird killed by a cat. I hate corporall punishments, and yet they've Scripture warrant. Father seldom hath recourse to 'em; and yet we feare as well as love him more than we doe mother, who, when she firste came among us, afore father had softened her down a little, used to hit righte and left. I mind me of her saying one day to her own daughter Daisy, "Your tucker is too low," and giving her a slap, mighte have beene hearde in Chelsea Reach. And there was the stamp of a greate red hand on Daisy's white shoulder all y^e forenoon, but the worst of it was, that Daisy tooke it with perfect immoveabilitie, nor lookt, in the leaste ashamed, which Scripture sayth a daughter shoulde doe, if her parent but spit in her face, i. e. sett on her some publick mark of contumely. Soe far from this, I even noted a silent look of scorn, which payned me, for of all the denunciations in Holy Writ, there is none more awfull to my mind than that which sayth, "The eye that mocketh at father or mother," not alone the tongue, but e'en the eye,— "the young ravens of the valley shall pick it out."

Sayth Lord Rutland to my father, in his acute sneering way, "Ah, ah, Sir Thomas, *Honores mutant mores.*"

"Not so, in faith, my lord," returns father, "but have a care lest we translate the proverb, and say, Honours change Manners."

It served him right, and the jest is worth preserving, because 'twas not premeditate, as my lord's very likely was, but retorted at once and in self-defence. I don't believe honours *have* changed the Mores. As father told mother, there's the same face under the hood. 'Tis comique, too, the fulfilment of Erasmus his prophecy. Plato's year has not come rounde, but they have got father to court, and the king seems minded never to let him goe. For us, we have the same untamed spiritts and unconstrayned course of life as ever, neither lett nor hindered in our daylie studdies, though we dress somewhat braver, and see more companie. Mother's head was a little turned, at first, by the change and enlargement of the householde . . . the acquisition of clerk of the kitchen, surveyor of the dresser, yeoman of the pastrie, etc., but as father laughingle tolde her, the increase of her cares soon steddied her witts, for she found she had twenty unthrifits to look after insteade of half-a-dozen. And the same with himself. His re-

sponsibilities are so increast, that he grutches at every hour the court steals from his family, and vows, now and then, he will leave off joking that the king may the sooner wearie of him. But this is onlie in jest, for he feels it is a *power* given him over lighter minds, which he may exert to usefull and high purpose. Onlie it keepeth him from needing Damocles his sword ; he trusts not in the favour of princes nor in the voyce of the people, and keeps his soul as a weaned child. 'Tis much for us now to get an hour's leisure with him, and makes us feel what our olde privileges were when we knew 'em not. Still, I'm pleased without being over elated, at his having risen to his proper level.

The king tooke us by surprise this morning : mother had scarce time to slip on her scarlett gown and coif, ere he was in y^e house. His grace was mighty pleasant to all, and, at going, saluted all round, which Bessy took humourously, Daisy immoveable, Meroy humblie, I distastefullie, and mother delightedlie. She calls him a fine man ; he is indeede big enough, and like to become too big ; with long slits of eyes that gaze freelie on all, as who shoulde say, " Who dare let or hinder us ? " His brow betokens sense and franknesse,

his eyebrows are supercilious, and his cheeks puffy. A rolling, straddling gait, and abrupt speech.

'Tother evening, as father and I were, unwontedly, strolling together down the lane, there accosts us a shabby poor fellow, with something unsettled in his eye. . . .

"Master, sir knight, and may it please your judgship, my name is Patteson."

"Very likely," said father, "and my name is More, but what is that to the purpose?"

"And that is *more* to the purpose, you mighte have said," returned the other.

"Why, soe I mighte," says father, "but how shoulde I have proved it?"

"You who are a lawyer shoulde know best about that," rejoyned the poor knave; "'tis too hard for poor Patteson."

"Well, but who are you?" says father, "and what do you want of me?"

"Don't you mind me?" says Patteson; "I played Hold-your-tongue, last Christmase revel was five years, and they called me a smart chap then, but last Martinmasse I fell from y^e church steeple, and shook my brain-pan, I think, for its contents have seemed addled ever since; soe what I want now is to be made a fool."

"Then you are not one now?" says father.

“If I were,” says Patteson, “I shoulde not have come to *you*.”

“Why, like cleaves to like, you know they say,” says father.

“Aye,” says ’tother, “but I’ve reason and feeling enow, too, to know you are no fool, though I thoughte you might want one. Great people like ’em at their tables, I’ve hearde say, though I am sure I can’t guesse why, for it makes me sad to see fools laughed at; ne’erthelesse, as I get laughed at alreadie, methinketh I may as well get paid for the job if I can, being unable, now, to doe a stroke of work in hot-weather. And I’m the only son of my mother, and she is a widow. But perhaps I’m not bad enough.”

“I know not that, poor knave,” says father, touched with quick pity, “and, for those that laugh at fools, my opinion, Patteson, is, that they are the greater fools who laugh. To tell you the truth, I had had noe mind to take a fool into mine establishment, having always had a fancy to be prime fooler in it myselfe; however, you incline me to change my purpose, for, as I said anon, like cleaves to like, soe I’ll tell you what we will doe—divide the businesse and go halves—I continuing the fooling, and thou receiving the salary; that is, if I

find, on inquiry, thou art given to noe vice, including that of scurrillitie."

"May it like your goodness," says poor Patteson, "I've been the subject, oft, of scurrillitie, and affect it too little to offend that way myself. I ever keep a civil tongue in my head, 'specially among young ladies."

"That minds me," says father, "of a butler who sayd he always was sober, especially when he had cold water to drink. Can you read and write?"

"Well, and what if I cannot?" returns Patteson, "there ne'er was but one, I ever heard of, that knew letters, never having learnt, and well he might, for he made them that made them."

"Meg, there is sense in this poor fellow," says father, "we will have him home and be kind to him."

And, sure enow, we have done so and been so ever since.

A glance at the antecedent pages of this libellus me-sheweth poor Will Roper at y^e season his love-fitt for me was at its height. He troubleth me with it no longer, nor with his religious disquietations. Hard study of the law hath filled his head with other matters, and made him infinitely more rationally, and by consequents, more agreeable.

'Twas one of those preferences young people sometimes manifest, themselves know neither why nor wherefore, and are shamed, afterwards, to be reminded of. I'm sure I shall ne'er remind him. There was nothing in me to fix a rational or passionate regard. I have neither Bess's witt nor white teeth, nor Daisy's dark eyes, nor Meroy's dimple. A plain-favoured girl, with changefulle spiritts—that's alle.

Patteson's latest jest was taking precedence of father yesterday, with the saying, "Give place, brother; you are but jester to King Harry, and I'm jester to Sir Thomas More; I'll leave you to decide which is y^e greater man of the two."

"Why, gossip," cries father, "his grace woulde make two of me."

"Not a bit of it," returns Patteson, "he's big enow for two such as you are, I grant ye, but the king can't make two of you. No! lords and commons may make a king, but a king can't make a Sir Thomas More."

"Yes, he can," rejoyns father, "he can make me Lord Chancellor, and then he will make me more than I am already; *ergo* he will make Sir Thomas more."

"But what I mean is," persists the fool, "that the king can't make such another as you are, any

more than all the king's horses and all the king's men can put Humpty-dumty together again, which is an ancient riddle, and full of marrow. And soe he'll find, if ever he lifts thy head off from thy shoulders, which God forbid."

Father delighted in sparring with Patteson far more than in jesting with y^e king, whom he alwaies looks on as a lion that may, any minute, fall on him and rend him. Whereas, with 'tother, he un-girds his mind. Their banter commonly exceeds not pleasantrie, but Patteson is ne'er without an answer, and although, maybe, each amuses himselfe now and then with thinking, "I'll put him up with such a question," yet, once begun, the skein runs off the reel without a knot, and shows the excellent nature of both, soe free are they alike from malice and over-license. Sometimes their cuts are neater than common listeners apprehend. I've seen Rupert and Will, in fencing, make their swords flash in the sun at every parry and thrust; agayn, owing to some change in mine owne position, or the decline of y^e sun, the scintillations have escaped me, though I've known their rays must have been emitted in some quarter alle the same.

Patteson, with one of Argus's cast feathers in his hand, is at this moment beneath my lattice, astride on a stone balustrade, while Bessy, whom he much

affects, is sitting on the steps, feeding her peacocks. Sayth Patteson, "Canst tell me, mistress, why peacocks have soe manie eyes in their tails, and yet can onlie see with two in their heads?"

"Because those two make them so vain alreadye, fool," says Bess, "that were they always beholding their own glory, they would be intolerable."

"And besides that," says Patteson, "the less we see or heare, either, of what passes behind our backs, the better for us, since knaves will make mouths at us then, for as glorious as we may be. Canst tell me mistress, why the peacock was the last bird that went into the ark?"

"First tell me fool," returns Bess, "how thou knowest that it was soe?"

"Nay, a fool may ask a question w^d puzzle a wiseard to answer," rejoyns Patteson; "I mighte ask you, for example, where they got their fresh kitchen-stuff in the ark, or whether the birds ate other than grains, or the wild beasts other than flesh. It needs must have been a granary."

"We ne'er shew ourselves such fools," says Bess, "as in seeking to know more than is written. They had enough, if none to spare, and we scarce can tell how little is enough for bare sustenance in a state of perfect inaction. If the creatures were kept low, they were all y^e less fierce."

“ Well answered, mistress,” says Patteson ;
“ but tell me, why do you wear two crosses ?”

“ Nay, fool,” returns Bess, “ I wear but one.”

“ Oh, but I say you wear two,” says Patteson,
“ one at your girdle, and one that no body sees.
We alle wear the unseen one, you know. Some
have theirs of gold, all carven and shaped, soe as
you hardlie tell it for a cross like my lord
cardinall, for instance but it is one, for alle
that. And others, of iron, that eateth into their
hearts methinketh Master Roper’s must be
one of ’em. For me, I’m content with one of wood,
like that our deare Lord bore ; what was goode
enow for him is goode enow for me, and I’ve noe
temptation to shew it, as it isn’t fine, nor yet to
chafe at it for being rougher than my neighbour’s,
nor yet to make myself a second because, it is not
hard enow. Doe you take me, mistress ?”

“ I take you for what you are,” says Bess, “ a
poor fool.”

“ Nay, niece,” says Patteson, “ my brother your
father hath made me rich.”

“ I mean,” says Bess, “ you have more wisdom
than witt, and a real fool has neither, therefore you
are only a make-believe fool.”

“ Well, there are many make-believe sages,”

says Patteson ; " for mine owne part, I never aim to be thoughte a Hiccius Doccius."

" A hic est doctus, fool, you mean," interrupts Bess.

" Perhaps I do," rejoins Patteson, " since other folks soe oft know better what we mean than we know ourselves. Alle I woulde say is, I ne'er set up for a conjuror. One can see as far into a mill-stone as other people without being that. For example, when a man is over-ta'en with qualms of conscience for having married his brother's widow when she is noe longer soe young and fair as she was a score of years ago, we know what that's a sign of. And when an Ipswich butcher's son takes on him the state of my lord pope, we know what that's a sign of. Nay, if a young gentlewoman become dainty at her sizes, and sluttish in her apparel, we . . . as I live, here comes John Heron with a fish in's mouth."

Poor Bess involuntarilie turned her head quicklie towards y^e watergate, on which Patteson, laughing as he lay on his back, points upward with his peacock's feather, and cries, " Overhead, mistress ! see, there he goes. Sure, you lookt not to see Master Heron making towards us between y^e posts and flower-pots, eating a dried ling ?" laughing as wildly as though he were verily a natural.

Bess, without a word, shook the crumbs from

her lap, and was turning into the house, when he witholds her a minute in a perfectly altered fashion, saying, "There be some works, mistress, our confessors tell us be works of supererogation is not that y° word? I learn a long one now and then such as be setting food before a full man, or singing to a deaf one, or buying for one's pigs a silver trough, or for the matter of that, casting pearls before a dunghill cock, or fishing for a heron, which is well able to fish for itself, and is an ill-natured bird after all, that pecks the hand of his mistress, and, for all her kindness to him, will not think of Bessy More."

How apt alle are to abuse unlimited license?
Yet 'twas good counsel.

Soe my fate is settled. Who knoweth at sunrise what will chance before sunsett? No; the Greeks and Romans mighte speake of chance and of fate, but we must not. Ruth's *hap* was to light on y° field of Boaz: but what she thought casual, y° Lord had contrived.

Firste, he gives me y° marmot. Then, the marmot dies. Then, I, having kept y° creature soe long, and being naturalie tender, must cry a little

over it. Then Will must come in and find me drying mine eyes. Then he must, most unreason-
able, suppose that I c^d not have loved the poor
animal for its own sake soe much as for his ; and
thereupon, falle a love-making in such down righte
earneste, that I, being alreadie somewhat upset,
and knowing 'twoulde please father and hat-
ing to be perverse and thinking much better
of Will since he hath studied soe hard, and given
soe largelie to y^e poor, and left off broaching his
heteroclite opinions. . . . I say, I supposed it
must be soe, some time or another, soe 'twas noe
use hanging back for ever and ever, soe now there's
an end, and I pray God give us a quiet life.

Noe one w^d suppose me reckoning on a quiet
life if they knew how I've cried alle this forenoon,
ever since I got quit of Will, by father's carrying
him off to Westminster. He'll tell father, I know,
as they goe along in the barge, or else coming
back, which will be soon enow, though I've ta'en
no heed of the hour. I wish 'twere cold weather,
and that I had a sore throat or stiff neck, or some-
what that might reasonable send me a-bed, and
keep me there till to-morrow morning. But I'm
quite well, and 'tis the dog-days, and cook is
thumping the rolling-pin on the dresser, and din-
ner is being served, and here comes father.

Father hath had some words with the Cardinall. 'Twas touching the draught of some forayn treaty which y^e Cardinall offered for his criticism, or rather, for his commendation, which father c^d not give. This nettled his Grace, who exclaimed—“By the mass, thou art the veriest fool of all the council.” Father, smiling, rejoined, “God be thanked, the King our master hath but one fool therein.”

The Cardinall may rage, but he can't rob him of the royal favour. The King was here yesterday, and walked for an hour or soe about the garden, with his arm round father's neck. Will coulde not help felicitating father upon it afterwards; to which father made answer, “I thank God I find his Grace my very good lord indeed, and I believe he doth as singularly favour me as any subject within this realn. Howbeit, son Roper, I may tell thee between ourselves, I feel no cause to be proud thereof, for if my head would win him a castle in France, it shoulde not fail to fly off.

—Father is graver than he used to be. No wonder. He hath much on his mind; the calls on his time and thoughts are beyond belief: but God is very good to him. His favour at home and abroad is immense: he hath good health, soe

have we alle ; and his family are established to his mind and settled alle about him, still under y^o same fostering roof. Considering that I am the most ordinarie of his daughters, 'tis singular I s^d have secured the best husband. Daisy lives peaceable with Rupert Allington, and is as indifferent, me seemeth, to him, as to all y^o world beside. He, on his part, loves her and their children with devotion, and woulde pass half his time in y^o nurserie. Dancey always had a hot temper, and now and then plagues Bess ; but she lets noe one know it but me. Sometimes she comes into my chamber and cries a little, but the next kind word brightens her, and I verilie believe her pleasures far exceed her payns. Giles Heron lost her through his own fault, and might have regained her good opinion after all, had he taken half the pains for her sake he now takes for her younger sister : I cannot think how Ceoy can favour him ; yet I suspect he will win her, sooner or later. As to mine own deare Will, 'tis the kindest, purest nature, the finest soul, the and yet how I was senselesse enow once to undervalue him.

Yes, I am a happy wife ; a happy daughter ; a happy mother. When my little Bill stroaked dear father's face just now, and murmured

“pretty!” he burst out a-laughing, and cried—
 “You are like the young Cyrus, who exclaimed,
 —‘Oh! mother, how pretty is my grandfather!’
 And yet, according to Xenophon, the old gentleman was soe rouged and made up, as that none but a child woulde have admired him!”

“That’s not the case,” I observed, “with Bill’s grandfather.”

“He’s a More all over,” says father fondly.
 “Make a pun, Meg, if thou canst, about Amor, Amore, or Amores. ’Twill only be the thousand and first on our name. Here, little knave, see these cherries: tell me who thou art, and thou shalt have one. ‘More, More!’ I knew it, sweet villain. Take them all.”

I oft sitt for an hour or more, watching Hans Holbein at his brush. He hath a rare gift of limning; and has, besides, the advantage of deare Erasmus his recommendation, for whom he hath alreddie painted our likenesses, but I think he has made us very ugly. His portraiture of my grandfather is marvellous; n’erthelesse, I look in vayn for y^o spiritualitie which our Luchese friend, Antonio Bonvisi, tells us is to be found in the productions of y^o Italian schools.

Holbein loves to paint with the lighte coming in upon his work from above. He says a lighte

from above puts objects in their proper lighte, and shows their just proportions ; a lighte from beneath reverses alle y^e natural shadows. Surelie, this hath some truth if we spiritualize it ?

Rupert's cousin, Rosamond Allington, is our guest. She is as beautiful as not as an angel, for she lacks the look of goodness, but very beautiful indeed. She cometh hither from Hever Castle, her account of y^e affairs whereof I like not. Mistress Anne is not there at present ; indeed, she is now always hanging about court, and followeth somewhat too literalie the Scripturall injunction to Solomon's spouse—to forget her father's house. The King likes well enow to be compared with Solomon, but Mistress Anne is not his spouse yet, nor ever will be, I hope. Flattery and Frenchified habits have spoiled her. I trow.

Rosamond says there is not a good chamber in the castle ; even y^e ball-room, which is on y^e upper floor of alle, being narrow and low. On a rainy day, long ago, she and Mistress Anne were playing at shuttlecock therein, when Rosamond's foot tripped at some unevenesse in y^e floor, and Mis-

tress Anne, with a laugh, cried out, "Mind you goe not down into y^e dungeon"—then pulled up a trap-door in the ball-room floor, by an iron ring, and made Rosamond look down into the unknown depth; alle in y^e blackness of darkness. 'Tis an awfulle thing to have onlie a step from a ball-room to a dungeon. I'm glad we live in a modern house, we have no such fearsome sights here.

Rosamond is sociable with alle, and mightilie taken with my husband, who, in his grave way, jests with her pleasantlie enough. Daisy, who seldom thinks anything worth giving an opinion on, said yestereven, when they were bantering eache other in Robin Hood's Walk, "I'm glad, Meg, she fancies your husband insteade of mine." 'Twas a foolish speech, and had better have beene left unsaid. What a pity that folks who say soe little shoulde say aught amiss. I have noe jealousy in my composition.

Father, hearing little Tom Allington hammering over y^e 34th Psalm this morning,—

"Child," says he, "don't say O! as unemphaticallie as if 'twere A, E, I, or U. David is labouring to expresse a thoughte too big for utterance.

. . . . ' Oh,—*taste* and *see* that the Lord is good.'
Try it agayn. That's better, my little man. Yet
once more."

I'm glad Rosamond is going. That tiresome
saying of Daisy's rankles. A poisoned shaft will
infect the soundest flesh. What a pity we ever
use such. I never will.

Yes, she's gone, but Will is not happy. Oh,
God, that I should ever know this feeling! We
can never be sure of ourselves; we can never be
sure of one another; we can never be sure of any
but Thee. For Thou art love itself, without a
shadowe of turning; and dost even condescend,
in Thine exquisite tendernesse, to call Thyself a
jealous God . . . for of whom are we jealous but
of those whom we passionately love? And such
is the love, not the sternnesse, wherewith Thou
sayest unto our souls, "Thou *shalt* not love any
God but me! thou *shalt* not make to thyself anie
earthlie idol! for I the Lord *thy* God am . . . a
jealous God,"—I cannot bear a rival on my throne,
which is your heart. Love me firste, him next,

even as much as you love yourself; and then I will bless you both.

Fecisti nos, etc.

Sancta mater, ora pro nobis, ora, ora.

Alas! am I awake, or dreaming still! He beganne to talk indistinctlie in his sleep last night, and as I cannot bear to hear people speak when they sleep but their heart waketh, I gently shooke him, and made him turn about; but not until that he had distinctlie exclaimed, "Tu, Jesu, es justicia mea." Thereon, a suddain light broke in on me, and I felt, I know not how to expresse what sense of relief, at the apprehension that his disquietation was not for Rosamond, but on y^e old count of justification by faith. Waking up, he says,—“Oh, sweet Meg, I am soe unhappy,” and gives way to tears; but I try to relieve him. But the matter is too hard for me; we cannot unravel it, soe he holds his peace, and sleeps, or affects to sleep, the while I pray to every saint in y^e calendar.

I am glad I did him injustice; which is a strange thing for a wife to say.

How many, many tears have I shed! Poor, imprudent Will!

To think of his escape from y^e Cardinal's fangs, and yet that he will probablie repeat y^e offence. This morning father and he had a long, and I fear me, fruitless debate in the garden; on returning from which father took me aside and sayd,—

“Meg, I have borne a long time with thine husband; I have reasoned and argued with him, and still given him my poor, fatherly counsell; but I perceive none of alle this can call him home agayn. And therefore, Meg, I will no longer dispute with him.” “Oh, father!” “Nor yet will I give him over; but I will set another way to work, and get me to God and pray for him.”

And have I not done so alreadie?

I feare me they parted unfriendlie; I heard father say, “Thus much I have a right to bind thee to, that thou indoctrinate not her in thine own heresies. Thou shalt not imperill the salvation of my child.”

Since this there has beene an irresistible gloom on our spiritts, a cloud between my husband's

soul and mine, without a word spoken. I pray, but my prayers seem dead.

. . . . Last night, after seeking unto this saint and that, methought “ why not applie unto y^e fountain head ? Maybe these holy spiritts may have limitations sett to y^e power of their intercessions—at anie rate, the ears of Mary mother are open to alle.”

Soe I beganne, “ Pia mater, fons amoris.”

Then, methoughte, “ but I am onlie asking *her* to intercede—I’ll mount a step higher still.”

Then I turned to y^e great intercessor of alle. But methought, “ Still he intercedes with another, although the same. And his owne saying was, ‘ In that day ye shall ask *me nothing*. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, *he* will give it you.’ ” Soe I did.

I fancy I fell asleep with y^e tears on my cheek. Will had not come up stairs. Then came a heavie, heavie sleep, not such as giveth rest ; and a dark wild dream. Methought I was tired of waiting for Will, and became alarmed. The night seemed a month long, and at last I grew soe weary of it, that I arose, put on some clothing, and went in search of him whom my soul loveth. Soon I founde him, sitting in a muse, and said : “ Will, deare Will ? ” but he hearde me not : and, going up to touch him,

I was amazed to be brought short up or ever I reached him, by something invisible betwixt us, hard, and cleare, and colde, . . . in short, a wall of ice! Soe it seemed, in my strange dreame. I pushed at it, but coulde not move it; called to him, but coulde not make him hear: and all y^e while my breath, I suppose, raised a vapour on the glassy substance, that grew thicker and thicker, soe as slowlie to hide him from me. I coulde discerne his head and shoulders, but not see down to his heart. Then I shut mine eyes in despair, and when I opened 'em, he was hidden altogether.

Then I prayed. I put my hot brow agaynst y^e ice, and I kept a weeping hot tears, and y^e warm breath of prayer, kept issuing from my lips; and still I was persisting, when, or ever I knew how, y^e ice beganne to melt! I felt it giving way! and looking up, coulde in joyfulle surprize, just discerne the lineaments of a figure close at t'other side; y^e face turned away, but yet in the guise of listening. And, images being apt to seem magnified and distorted through vapours, methought 'twas altogether bigger than Will, yet himself, nothingthelesse; and, y^e barrier between us having sunk away to breast-height, I layd mine hand on's shoulder, and he turned his head, smiling, though in silence; and . . . oh, heaven! 'twas not Will, but ——

What coude I doe, even in my dreame, but fall at his feet? What coude I doe, waking, but the same? 'Twas gray of morn; I was feverish and unrefreshed, but I wanted no more lying-a-bed. Will had arisen and gone forthe; and I, as quicklie as I could make myself readie, sped after him.

I know not what I expected, nor what I meant to say. The moment I opened the door of his closett, I stopt short. There he stode, in the centre of the chamber; his hand resting flat on an open book, his head raised somewhat up, his eyes fixed on something or some one, as though in speaking communion with 'em; his whole visage lightened up and glorifide with an unspeakable calm and grandeur that seemed to transfigure him before me; and, when he hearde my step, he turned about, and 'steade of histing me away, helde out his arms. . . . We parted without neede to utter a word.

Events have followed too quick and thick for me to note 'em. Firste, father's embassade to Cambray, which I shoulde have grieved at more on our owne accounts, had it not broken off alle further collision with Will. Thoroughlie home-sick, while

abroad, poor father was ; then, on his return, he noe sooner sett his foot a-land, than y° King summond him to Woodstock. 'Twas a couple o' nights after he left us, that Will and I were roused by Patteson's shouting beneath our window, " Fire, fire, quoth Jeremiah !" and the house was a-fire sure enow. Greate part of y° men's quarter, together with alle y° out houses and barns, consumed without remedie, and alle through y° carelessness of John Holt. Howbeit, noe lives were lost, nor any one much hurt ; and we thankfullie obeyed deare father's behest, soe soone as we received y° same, that we woulde get us to church, and there, upon our knees, return humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God for our late deliverance from a fearfulle death. Alsoe, at father's desire, we made up to y° poor people on our premises theire various losses, which he bade us doe, even if it left him without soe much as a spoon.

. But then came an equallie unlookt for, and more appalling event : y° fall of my Lord Cardinall, whereby my father was shortlie raised to y° highest pinnacle of professional greatnesse, being made Lord Chancellor, to y° content, in some sort, of Wolsey himself, who sayd he was y° onlie man fit to be his successor.

The unheard of splendour of his installation

dazzled the vulgar ; while the wisdom that marked y^e admirable discharge of his daylie duties, won y^e respect of alle thinking men, but surprised none who alreadie knew father. On y^e day succeeding his being sworn in, Patteson marched hither and thither bearing a huge placard, inscribed, “ Partnership Dissolved ;” and apparelled himself in an old suit, on which he had bestowed a coating of black paint, with weepers of white paper ; assigning for’t that “ his brother was dead.” “ For now,” quoth he, “ that they’ve made him Lord Chancellor, we shall ne’er see Sir Thomas more.”

Now, although y^e poor Cardinal was commonlie helde to show much judgment in his decisions, owing to y^e naturall soundness of his understanding, yet, being noe lawyer, abuses had multiplied during his chancellorship, more especially in y^e way of enormous fees and gratuities. Father, not content with shunning base lucre in his proper person, will not let anie one under him, to his knowledge, touch a bribe ; whereat Dancey, after his funny fashion, complains, saying :

“ The fingers of my Lord Cardinall’s veriest door-keepers were tipt with gold, but I, since I married your daughter, have got no pickings ; which in your case may be commendable, but in mine is

nothing profitable." Father, laughing, makes answer :

" Your case is hard, son Dancey, but I can onlie say for your comfort, that, soe far as honesty and justice are concerned, if mine owne father, whom I reverence dearly, stode before me, on y^e one hand, and the devil, whom I hate extremly, on y^e other, yet, the cause of y^e latter being just, I shoulde give the devil his due."

Giles Heron hath found this to his cost. Presuming on his near connexion with my father, he refused an equitable accommodation of a suit, which, thereon, coming into court, father's decision was given flat against him.

His decision against mother was equallie impartiall, and had something comique in it. Thus it befelle. A beggar-woman's little dog, which had been stolen from her, was offered my mother for sale, and she bought it for a jewel of no great value. After a week or soe, the owner finds where her dog is, and cometh to make complaynt of y^e theft to father, then sitting in his hall. Sayth father, " Let's have a faire hearing in open court ; thou, mistress, stand there where you be, to have impartiall justice ; and thou, Dame Alice, come up hither, because thou art of y^e higher degree. Now, then, call each of you the puppy, and see which

he will follow." Soe Sweetheart, in spite of mother, springs off to y^e old beggar-woman, who, unable to keep from laughing, and yet moved at mother's losse, sayth :

" Tell'ee what mistress . . . thee shalt have 'un for a groat."

" Nay," sayth mother, " I won't mind giving thee a piece of gold ;" soe the bargain was satisfactorily concluded.

Father's despatch of business is such, that, one morning befor the end of term, he was tolde there was no other cause nor petition to be sett before him ; the which, being a case unparalleled, he desired mighte be formally recorded.

He ne'er commences businesse in his owne court without first stepping into y^e court of King's Bench, and there kneeling down to receive my grandfather's blessing. Will sayth 'tis worth a world to see y^e unction with which the deare old man bestows it on him.

In Rogation-week, following the Rood as usuall, round y^e parish, Heron counselled him to go a horseback for y^e greater seemliness, but he made answer that 'twoulde be unseemlie indeede for y^e servant to ride after his master going a-foot.

His grace of Norfolk, coming yesterday to dine

with him, finds him in the church-choir, singing with a surplice on.

“What!” cries y^e Duke, as they walked home together, “my Lord Chancellor playing the parish clerk? Sure, you dishonor the King and his office.”

“Nay,” says father, smiling, “your grace must not deem that the King, your master and mine, will be offended at my honoring *his* Master.”

Sure 'tis pleasant to heare father taking y^e upper hand of these great folks; and to have 'em coming and going, and waiting his pleasure, because he is y^e man whom y^e King delighted to honour.

True, indeede, with Wolsey 'twas once y^e same; but father need not feare y^e same ruin; because he hath Him for his friend, whom Wolsey said would not have forsaken him had he served Him as he served his earthly master. 'Twas a misproud priest; and there's the truth on't. And father is not misproud; and I don't believe we are; though proud of him we cannot fail to be.

And I know not why we may not be pleased with prosperitie, as well as patient under adversitie; as long as we say, “Thou Lord, hast made our hill soe strong.” 'Tis more difficult to bear with comelinesse, doubtlesse; and envious folks

there will be ; and we know alle things have an end, and everie sweet hath its sour, and everie fountain its fall ; but 'tis very pleasart for all that.

Who coulede have thoughte that those ripe grapes whereof dear Gaffer ate soe plentifullie, s^d have ended his days? This event hath filled y^e house with mourning. He had us all about his bed to receive his blessing ; and 'twas piteous to see father fall upon his face, as Joseph on the face of Jacob, and weep upon him and kiss him. Like Jacob, my grandsire lived to see his well-beloved son attain to y^e height of earthly glory, his heart unspoyled and untouched.

The days of mourning for my grandsire are at an end ; yet father still goeth heavilie. This forenoon, looking forthe of my lattice, I saw him walking along the river side, his arms cast about Will's neck ; and 'twas a dearer sight to my soul than to see the king walking there with his arm around father's neck. They seemed in such earnest con-

verse, that I was avised to ask Will, afterwards, what they had been saying. He told me that, after much friendly chat together on this and that, father fell into a muse, and presently, fetching a deep sigh, says :

“ Would to God, son Roper, on condition three things were well established in Christendom, I were put into a sack, and cast presently into the Thames.” Will sayth :

“ What three soe great things can they be, father as to move you to such a wish ?”

“ In faith, Will,” answers he, “ they be these : First, that whereas the most part of Christian princes be at war, they were at universal peace. Next, that whereas the Church of Christ is at present sore afflicted with divers errors and heresies, it were well settled in a godly uniformity. Last, that this matter of the king’s marriage were, to the glory of God, and the quietness of alle parties, brought to a good conclusion.”

Indeed, this last matter preys on my father’s soul. He hath even knelt to the king to refrain from exacting compliance with his grace’s will concerning it ; movingly reminding him, even with tears, of his grace’s own words to him on delivering the great seal, “ First look unto God, and, after God, unto me.” But the king is heady in this

matter; stubborn as a mule or wild ass's colt, whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle if they be to be governed at alle; and the king hath taken y° bit between his teeth, and there is none dare ride him. All for love of a bröwn girl, with a wen on her throat, and an extra finger.

How short a time agone it seemeth, that in my prosperity I sayd, "We shall never be moved; Thou, Lord, of Thy goodness hast made our hill soe strong!" Thou didst turn away Thy face, and I was troubled!

Thus sayth Plato: of him whom he soughte, but hardly found: "Truth is his body, and Light his shadow." A marvelous saying for a heathen.

Hear also what St. John sayth: "God is Light; and in him is no darkness at all." "And the Light was the life of men: and the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not."

Hear also what St. Augustine sayth: "They are the most uncharitable towards error who have never experienced how hard a matter it is to come at the Truth."

Hard, indeed. Here's father agaynst Will, and agaynst Erasmus, of whom he once c^d not speak well enough; and now he says that if he upholds such and such opinions, his dear Erasmus may be the devil's Erasmus for what he cares. And here's father at issue with half y^e learned heads in Christendom concerning y^e king's marriage. And yet, for alle that, I think father is in the right.

He taketh matters soe to heart that e'en his appetite fails. Yesterday he put aside his old favorite dish of brewis, saying, "I know not how 'tis, good Alice; I've lost my stomach, I think, for my old relishes" and this, e'en with a tear in his eye. But 'twas not the brewis, I know, that made it start.

He hath resigned the Great Seal! And none of us knew e'en of his meditating it, nor of his having done soe, till after morning prayers to-day, when, insteade of one of his gentlemen stepping up to my mother in her pew with the words, "Madam, my Lord is gone," he cometh up to her himself, with a smile on's face, and sayth, low bowing as he spoke, "Madam, my Lord is gone." She takes it for one of the manie jests whereof she misses the point;

SIR THOMAS MORE.

and 'tis not till we are out of church, in y° open air, that she fully comprehends my Lord Chancellor is indeed gone, and she hath onlie her Sir Thomas More.

A burst of tears was no more than was to be lookt for from poor mother ; and in sooth, we alle felt aggrieved and mortyfide enough ; but 'twas a short sorrow ; for father declared that he had cast Pelion and Ossa off his back into the bottomless pit ; and fell into such funny antics that we were soon as merry as ever we were in our lives. Patten-son, so soon as he hears it, comes leaping and skipping across the garden, crying, " A fatted calf ! let a fatted calf be killed, masters and mistresses, for this my brother who was dead is alive again ! " and falls a-kissing his hand. But poor Patten-son's note will soon change ; for father's diminished state will necessitate y° dismissal of all extra hands ; and their is manie a servant under his roof whom he can worse spare than the poor fool.

In the evening he gathers us alle about him in the pavillion, where he throws himself into his old accustomed seat, casts his arm about mother, and cries, " How glad must Cincinnatus have been to spy out his cottage again, with Racilie standing at the gate ! " Then, called for curds and cream ; sayd how sweet y° soft May air was coming over

the river, and bade Cecil sing "The king's hunt's up." After this one ballad after another was called for, till alle had sung their lay, ill or well, he listening the while with closed eyes, and a composed smile about his mouth; the two furrows between his brows relaxing graduallie till at length they c^d no more be seene. At last he says,

"Who was that old prophet that could not or would not prophesy for a King of Judah till a minstrel came and played unto him? Sure, he must have loved as I do, the very lovely song of one that playeth well upon an instrument, yclept the human heart; and have felt, as I do now, the spirit given him to speak of matters foreign to his mind. 'Tis of *res angusta domæ*, dear brats, I must speak; soe, the sooner begun, the sooner over. Here am I, with a dear wife and eight loved children for my daughters' husbands and my son's wife are my children as much as any; and Mercy Giggs is a daughter too nine children, then, and eleven grandchildren, and a swarm of servants to boot, all of whom have as yet eaten what it pleased them, and drunken what it suited them at my board, without it being any one's business to say them nay. 'Twas the dearest privilege of my Lord Chancellor; but now he's

dead and gone, how shall we contract the charges of Sir Thomas More?"

We looked from one to another, and were silent.

"I'll tell you, dear ones," he went on, "I have been brought up at Oxford, at an inn of Chancery, at Lincoln's Inn, and at the King's Court; from the lowest degree, that is, to the highest; and yet have I in yearly revenues at this present, little above one hundred pounds a year; but then as Chilo sayth, 'honest loss is preferable to dishonest gain; by the first, a man suffers once; by the second, forever;' and I may take up my parable with Samuel, and say: "Whose ox have I taken? whose ass have I taken? whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? of whose hand have I received any bribe to blinde mine eyes therewith?" No, my worst enemies can not lay to my charge any of these things, and my trust in you is, that, rather than regret I should not have made a purse by any such base methods, you will all cheerfully contribute your proportions to the common fund, and share and share alike with me in this my diminished state."

We all got about him, and by our words and kisses gave warrant that we would.

"Well then," quoth he, "my mind is, that since

we are all of a will to walk down hill together, we will do so at a breathing pace, and not drop down like a plummet. Let all things be done decently and in order ; we won't descend to Oxford fare first nor yet to the fare of New Inn. We'll begin with Lincoln's Inn diet, whereon many good and wise men thrive well ; if we find this draw too heavily on the common purse, we will, next year, come down to Oxford fare, with which many great and learned doctors have been conversant ; and, if our purse stretch not to cover e'en this, why, in heaven's name ! we'll go begging together, with staff and wallet, and sing a *Salve Regina* at every good man's door, whereby we shall still keep company, and be merry together."

Now that the first surprise and grief, and the first fervour of fidelity and self-devotion have passed off, we have subsided into how deep and holy a quiet !

We read of the desertion of the world as a matter of course ; but, when our own turn comes, it does seem strange, to find ourselves let fall down the stream without a single hand outstretched to help us ; forgotten, in a moment, as though we

had never been, by those who lately ate and laughed at our table. And this, without any fault or offence of ours, but merely from our having lost the light of the King's countenance. I say, it does seem strange ; but how fortunate, how blessed are those to whom such a course of events only seem strange, unaccompanied by self-reproach and bitterness ! I could not help feeling this, in reading an affectionate letter dearè father writ this forenoon to Erasmus, wherein he sayd, "I have now obtained what, from a child, I have continually wished ! that, being entirely quit of business and all publick affairs, I might live for a time only to God and myself."

Having no hankering after the old round he soe long hath run, he now, in fact, looks younger every day ; and yet, not with the same kind of youth he had before his back was bowed under the chancellorship. 'Tis a more composed, chastised sort of rejuvenescence ; rather the soft warmth of autumn, which sometimes seems like May, than May itself : the enkindling, within this mortal tabernacle, of a heavenly light that never grows dim, because it is immortal ; and burns the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever : a youthfulness of soul and mind characterised by growth ; something with which this world and its fleeting fancies has nothing to

do ; something that the king can neither impart nor take away.

We have had a tearfull morning poor Patteson has gone. My father hath obtained good quarters for him with my Lord Mayor, with a stipulation that he shall retain his office with the Lord Mayor for the time being, as long as he can fill it at all. This suits Patteson, who says he would sooner shift masters year by year, than grow too fond of any man again, as he hath of father ; but there has been sad blubbering and blowing of noses.

This afternoon, coming upon Mercy seated in y^e alcove, like unto the image of some saint in a niche, her hands folded on her lap, and her eyes steadfastly agaze on the setting sun, I could not but mark how years were silentlie at work upon her, as doubtless upon us all ; the tender, fearfull girl having thus graduallie changed into the sober, high-minded woman. She is soe seldom seen in repose, so constantly astir and afoot in this or that kind office, mostly about the children, that I had never thought upon it before ; but now I was alle at once avised to marvel that she who had so long

seemed fitter for heaven than earth, shoulde never literallie have vowed herself y^o spouse of Christ, more in especiall as all expectation of being y^o spouse of anie else must long since have died within her.

I sayd, "Mercy, thou lookst like a nun: how is't thou hast ne'er become one in earnest!"

She started; then sayd, "Could I be more useful? more harmless? less exposed to temptation? or half as happy as I am now? In sooth, Meg, the time has been when methought, how sweet y^o living death of the cloister! How good that must needs be which had the suffrages of Chrysostom the golden-mouthed, and holy Ambrose, and our own Anselm! How peacefull, to take wing like y^o dove, and fly away from a naughty world, and be at rest! How brave, to live alone, like St. Antony in the desert! only I would have had some books with me in my cave, and 'tis uncertayn whether St. Antony had knowledge of letters, beyond y^o heaven-taught lesson, 'God is love' . . . for methought so much reflection and no action would be too much for a woman's mind to bear—I might goe mad: and I remembered me how the dove that gladly flew back, and abode in y^o ark till such time as a new home was ready for her. And methought, cannot I live apart from sin

here, and now ; and as to sorrow, where can we live apart from that ? Sure, we may live on y^e skirts of the world in a spiritt as truly unwordlie as though we were altogether out of it ; and here I may come and go, and range in the fresh air, and love other folks' children, and read my Psalter, and pore over the sayings of the wise men of old, and look on the faces I love, and sit at the feet of Sir Thomas More. Soe, there, Meg, are my poor reasons for not caring to be a nun. Our deare Lord is in himself all that our highest, holiest affections can seek or comprehend ; for he made these our hearts ; he gave us these our affections ; and through them the Spirit speaks. Aspiring to their source, they rise up like the white smoke and bright flame ; while on earth, if left unmastered, they burn, suffocate, and destroy. Yet they have their naturall and innocent outlets even here ; and a woman may warm herself by them without scorching, and yet be neither a wife nor a nun."

Ever since father's speech to us in y^e pavillion, we have been of one heart and one soul ; neither have any of us said that aught of the things we possessed were our own, but we have had all things

in common. And we have eaten our meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

This afternoon, expressing to father my gratefull sense of our present happiness " Yes, Meg." returns he, " I too am deeply thankful for this breathing space."

" Do you look on at it as no more, then ?" I sayd.

" As no more, Meg : we shall have a thunder-clap by-and-by. Look out on the Thames. See how unwontedlie clear it is, and how low the swallows fly How distinctlie we see the green sedges on Battersea bank, and their reflected images in the water. We can almost discern the features of those poor knaves digging in the cabbage gardens, and hear 'em talk, so still is y^e air. Have you ne'er before noted these signs ?"

A storm is brewing," I sayd.

" Aye, we shall have a lightening-flash anon. So still, Meg, is also our atmosphere just now. God is giving us a breathing space, as he did to the Egyptians before the plague of hail, that they might gather their live stock within doors. Let us take for example them that believed and obeyed him ; and improve this holy pause."

Just at this moment, a few heavy drops fell agaynst the window pane, and were seen by both. Our eyes met ; and I felt a silent pang.

“ Five days before the Passover,” resumed father, “ all seemed as still and quiet as we are now ; but Jesus knew his hour was at hand. E’en while he yet spake familiarly among the people, there came a sound from heaven, and they that stood by said it thundered ; but *he* knew it for the voice of his dear Father. Let us, in like manner, when the clap cometh, recognise in it the voice of God, and not be afraid with any amazement.”

Gammer Gurney is dead, and I must say I am glad of it. The change, to her, must be blessed, and there seemed some danger lest, after having escaped being ducked for a witch, she should have been burnt for a heretic. Father looked on her as an obstinate old woman ; Will counted her little short of a saint and prophetess, and kept her well supplied with alle she could need. Latterly she was stone deaf ; so ’tis a happy release.

The settled purpose of father’s soul, just now, is to make up a marriage between Mercy and Dr. Clement. ’Tis high advancement for her, and there seems to have been some old liking between ’em we never knew of.

Though some months have passed since my father uttered his warning voice, and all continues to go quiet, I cannot forbear, now and then, to call his monition to mind, and look about for the cloud that is to bring the thunder-clap ; but the expectation sobers rather than saddens me.

This morning, leaning over the river wall, I was startled by the cold, damp hand of some one from behind being laid on mine. At the same time a familiar voice exclaimed, " Canst tell us, mistress, why fools have hot heads and hands icy cold ?"

I made answer, " Canst tell me, Patteson, why fools should stray out of bounds !"

" Why, that's what fools do every day," he readily replied ; " but this is All Fools' Day, mine own special holiday ; and I told my Lord Mayor overnight, that if he lookt for a fool this morning, he must look in the glass. In sooth, mistress Meg, I should by rights wear the gold chain and he the motley ; for a proper fool he is, and I shall be glad when his year's service to me is out. The worst o' these Lord Mayors is, that we can't part with 'em till their time's up. Why, now this present one hath not so much understanding as would foot an old stocking ; 'twas but yesterday when, in quality of my taster, he civilly enough makes over to me a half-eaten plate of gurnet, which I wave aside,

thus, saying, I eat no fish of which I cannot affirm
'rari sunt boni,' few are the bones and I
protest to you he knew it not for fool's Latin. Thus
I'm driven, from mere discouragement, to leave
prating for listening, which thou knowest, mistress,
is no fool's office; and among y° sundrie matters I
heare at my lord's table for he minds not
what he says before his servants, thereby giving
new proof 'tis he shoulde wear the motley
I note his saying that y° king's private marriage
will assuredlie be made publick this coming Easter,
and my Lady Ann will be crowned more by
token, he knows y° merchant that will supply the
Genoa velvet and cloth of gold, and the masquers
that are to enact the pageant. For the love o'
safety, then, mistress Meg, bid thy good father e'en
take a fool's advice, and eat humble pie betimes,
for, doubt not this proud madam to be as vindic-
tive as Herodias, and one that, unless he appease
her full early, will have his head set before her in
a charger. I've said my say.'

Three bishops have been here this forenoon, to
bid father to y° coronation, and offer him twenty
pounds to provide his dress; but father hath, with
courtesie, declined to be present. After much

friendly pressing, they parted, seemingly on good terms ; but I have misgivings of y^e issue.

A ridiculous charge hath been got up 'gainst dear father ; no less than of bribery and corruption. One Parnell complaineth of a decree given agaynst him in favour of one Vaughan, whose wife, he deponeth, gave father a gilt flaggon. To y^e noe small surprise of the Councill, father admitted that she had done soe ; “ But, my lords,” proceeded he, when they had uttered a few sentences of reprehension somewhat too exultantlie, “ will ye list the conclusion of the tale ? I bade my butler fill the cup with wine, and having drunk her health, I made her pledge me, and then restored her the gift, and would not take it again.”

As innocent a matter, touching the offering him a pair of gloves containing forty pounds, and his taking the first and returning the last, saying he preferred his gloves without lining, hath been made publick with like triumph to his own good fame ; but alack ! these feathers show which way sets the wind.

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A heavier charge than either of y^e above hath been got up, concerning the wicked woman of Kent, with whom they accuse him of having tampered, that, in her pretended revelations and rhapsodies, she might utter words against the king's divorce. His name hath, indeed, been put in the bill of attainder; but, out of favour, he hath been granted a private hearing, his judges being the new archbishop, the new chancellor, his grace of Norfolk, and Master Cromwell.

He tells us that they stuck not to y^e matter in hand, but began cunningly enow to sound him on y^e king's matters; and finding they could not shake him, did proceed to threats, which, he told 'em, might well enow scare children, but not him, and as to his having provoked his grace the king to sett forth in his book aught to dishonour and fetter a good Christian, his grace himself well knew the book was never shown him save for verbal criticism when y^e subject matter was completed by the *makers* of y^e same, and that he had warned his grace not to express soe much submission to the pope. Whereupon they with great displeasure dismissed him, and he took boat for Chelsea with mine husband in such gay spirits, that Will, not

having been privy to what had passed, concluded his name to have beene struck out of y^e bill of attainder, and congratulated him thereupon soe soon as they came aland, saying, "I guess, father, all is well, seeing you thus merry."

"It is indeed, son Roper," returns father steadily, repeating thereupon, once or twice, this phrase, "All is well."

Will, somehow mistrusting him, puts the matter to him agayn.

"You are then, father, put out of the bill?"

"Out of the bill, good fellow?" repeats father, stopping short in his walk, and regarding him with a smile that Will sayth was like to break his heart. . . . "Wouldst thou know, dear son, why I am so joyful? In good faith, I have given the devil a foul fall, for I have with those lords gone so far, as that without great shame I can ne'er go back. The first step, Will, is the worst, and that's taken."

And so, to the house, with never another word, Will being smote at the heart.

But, this forenoon, deare Will comes running in me, with joy all bright, and tells me he hath just heard from Cromwell that father's name is in sooth struck out. Thereupon, we go together to him with the news. He taketh it thankfully, yet com-

posedly, saying, as he lays his hand upon my shoulder, "In faith, Meg, quod differtur non auferitur." Seeing me somewhat stricken and overborne, he sayeth, "Come, let's leave good Will awhile to the company of his own select and profitable thoughts, and take a turn together by the water side."

Then closing his book, which I marked was Plato's Phædon, he steps forthe with me into the garden, leaning on my shoulder, and pretty heavilie too. After a turn or two in silence, he lightens his pressure, and in a bland, peaceifying tone commences Horace his tenth ode, book second, and goes through the first fourteen or fifteen lines in a kind of lulling monotone; then takes another turn or two, ever looking at the Thames, and in a stronger voice begins his favorite

"Justum, ac tenacem propositi virum
Non civium ardor," etc.

on to

[... "Impavidum ferient ruinæ;"]

—and lets go his hold on me to extend his hand in fine, free action. Then, drawing me to him agayn, presentlie murmurs, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with y^e glory which shall be revealed in

us. . . . Oh no, not worthy to be compared. I have lived; I have laboured; I have loved. I have lived in them I loved; laboured for them I loved; loved them for whom I laboured; my labour has not been in vayn. To love and to labour is the sum of living, and yet how manie think they live who neither labour nor love. Again, how manie labour and love, and yet are not loved; but I have beene loved, and my labour has not been in vayn. Now, the daye is far spent, and the night forecloseth, and the time draweth nigh when man resteth from his labours, even from his labours of love; but still he shall love and he shall live where the Spiritt sayth he shall rest from his labours, and where his works do follow him, for he entereth into rest through and to Him who is Life, and Light, and Love."

Then looking steadfastlie at the Thames, "How quietlie," sayth he, "it flows on! This river, Meg, hath its origin from seven petty springs somewhither amongst y^e Gloucestershire hills, where they bubble forthe unnoted save by the herd and hind. Belike, they murmur over the pebbles prettily enough; but a great river, mark you, never murmurs. It murmured and babbled too, 'tis like, whilst only a brook, and brawled away as it widened and deepened and chafed

agaynst obstacles, and here and there got a fall, and splashed and made much ado, but ever kept running on towards its end, still deepening and widening; and now towards the close of its course look you how swift and quiet it is, running mostly between flats, and with the dear blue heaven reflected in its face."

'Twas o' Wednesdaze was a week, we were quietly taking our dinner, when, after a loud and violent knocking at y^e outer door, in cometh a poursuivant, and summoneth father to appear next daze before y^e commissioners, to take y^e newly coined oath of supremacy. Mother utters a hasty cry, Bess turns white as death, but I, urged by I know not what suddain impulse to con the new comer's visage narrowly, did with eagerness exclaim, "Here's some jest of father's; 'tis only Dick Halliwell!"

Whereupon, father burst out a laughing, hugged mother, called Bessy a silly puss, and gave Halliwell a grout for's payns. Now, while some were laughing, and others taking father prettie sharplie to task for soe rough a crank, I fell a musing, what o^d be y^e drift of this, and could only surmize

it mighte be to harden us beforehand, as 'twere, to what was sure to come at last. And the preapprehension of this so belaboured my already o'erburthened spirits, as that I was fayne to betake myself to y^e nurserie, and lose alle thought and reflection in my little Bill's prettie ways. And, this not answering, was forot to have recourse to prayer; then, leaving my closett, was able to return to y^e nurserie, and forget myselfe awhile in the mirth of the infants.

Hearing voyces beneath y^e lattice, I lookt forthe, and behelde his Grace of Norfolk (of late a strange guest) walking beneath y^e window in earnest converse with father, and, as they turned about, I heard him say, "By the mass, Master More, 'tis perilous striving with princes. I could wish you, as a friend, to incline to the king's pleasure; for, *indignatio principis mors est.*"

"Is that all?" says father; "why then there will be onlie this difference between your grace and me, that I shall die to-daye, and you to-morrow;"—waich was the sum of what I caught.

Next morning, we were breaking our fast with peacefullness of heart, on y^e principle that sufficient for the daye is the evill thereof, and there had beene a wordy war betweene our two factions of the Neri and Bianchi, Bess having defalked

from y^e mancheteers on y^e ground that black bread sweetened the breath and settled the teeth, to the no-small triumph of the cob-loaf party; while Daisy, persevering at her crusts, sayd "No, I can cleave to the rye bread as steadilie as anie among you, but 'tis vayn of father to maintain that it is as toothsome as a manchet, or that I eat it to whiten my teeth, for thereby he robs self-deniall of its grace."

Father, strange to say, seemed taken at vantage, and was pausing for a retort, when Hobson coming in and whispering somewhat in his ear, he rose suddainlie and went forthe of the hall with him, putting his head back agayn to say, "Rest ye alle awhile where ye be," which we did, uneasilie enow. Anon he returns, brushing his beaver, and says calmlie, "Now, let's forthe to church," and clips mother's arme beneathe his owne and leads the way. We follow as soon as we can, and I, listing to him more than to y^e priest, did think I never hearde him make response more composedlie, nor sing more lustille, by the which I founde myself in stouter heart. After prayers, he is shriven, after which he saunters back with us to the house, then brisklie turning on his heel, cries to my husband, "Now, Will, let's toward, lad," and claps the wicket after him,

leaving us at t'other side without so much as casting back a parting look. Though he evermore had been advised to let us companie him to the boat, and there kiss him once and agayn or ever he went, I know not that I s^d have thought much of this, had not Daisy, looking after him keenly, exclaimed somewhat shortlie as she turned in doors, "I wish I had not uttered that quip about the cob-loaf."

Lord, how heavilie sped y^e day! The house, too big now for its master's diminished retinue, had yet never hitherto seemed lonesome; but now a somewhat of dreary and dreadfull, inexpressible in words, invisible to the eye, but apprehended by the inner sense, filled the blank space alle about. For the first time, everie one seemed idle; not only disinclined for businesse, but as though there were something unseemlie in addressing one's self to it. There was nothing to cry about, nothing to talk over, and yet we alle stode agaze at each other in groups, like the cattle under y^e trees when a storm is at hand. Mercy was the first to start off. I held her back and said, "What is to do?" She whispered, "Pray." I let her arm drop, but Bess at that instant comes up with cheeks as colourless as parchment. She sayth, "'Tis made out now. A poursuivant *de facto* fetched him

forthe this morning." We gave one deep, universal sigh; Mercy broke away, and I after her, to seek the same remedie, but alack, in vayn. . . .

How large a debt we owe you, wise and holie men of old! How ye counsel us to patience, incite us to self-mastery, cheer us on to high emprise, temper in us the heat of youth, school our inexperience, calm the o'erwrought mind, allay the anguish of disappointment, cheat suspense, and master despair. . . . How much better and happier ye would make us, if we would but list your teaching!

Bess hath fallen sick; no marvell. Everie one goeth heavilie. All joy is darkened; the mirthe of the house is gone.

Will tells me, that as they pushed off from y^e stairs, father took him about the neck and whispered, "I thank our Lord, the field is won!" Sure, Regulus ne'er went forthe with higher self-devotion.

Having declared his inability to take y^e oath as it stode, they bade him, Will tells me, take a turn in the garden while they administered it to sundrie others, thus affording him leisure for re-

consideration, But they might as well have bidden the neap-tide turn before its hour. When called in agayn, he was as firm as ever, so was given in ward to y° Abbot of Westminster till the king's grace was informed of the matter. And now the fool's wise saying of vindictive Herodias came true, for 'twas the king's mind to have mercy on his old servant, and tender him a qualified oath; but queen Anne, by her importunate clamours, did overrule his proper will, and at four days end, y° full oath being agayn tendered and rejected, father was committed to y° Tower. Oh, wicked woman, how could you? Sure, you never loved a father.



In answer to our incessant applications throughout this last month past, mother hath at length obtained access to dear father. She returned, her eyes nigh swollen to closing with weeping we crowded round about, burning for her report, but 'twas some time ere she could fetch breath or heart to give it us. At length Daisy, kissing her hand once and agayn draws forthe a disjointed tale, somewhat after this fashion.

“Come, give over weeping, dearest mother,

'twill neither do him, nor you, nor us any goode. . . . What was your first speech of him?"

"Oh, my first speech, sweetheart, was, 'What, my goodness, Mr. More! I marvell how that you, who were always counted a wise man, s^d now soe play the fool as to lie here in this close, filthy prison, shut up with mice and rats, when you mighte be abroade and at your liberty, with y^e favour of king and council, and return to your righte fayr house, your books and gallery, and your wife, children, and household, if soe be you onlie woulde but do what the bishops and best learned of the realm have, without scruple, done alreadye."

"And what sayd he, mother, to that?"

"Why, then, sweetheart, he chucks me under the chin and sayeth, 'I prithee, good mistress Alice, to tell me one thing.' Soe then I say, 'What thing?' Soe then he sayeth, 'Is not this house, sweetheart, as nigh heaven as mine own?' Soe then I jerk my head away and say, 'Tillyvalley! tillyvalley.'"

Sayth Bess, "Sure, mother, that was cold comfort. . . . And what next?"

"Why, then I said, 'Bone Deus, man! Bone Deus! will this gear never be left?' Soe then he sayth, 'Well then, Mrs. Alice, if it be soe, 'tis

mighty well, but for my part, I see noe great reason why I shoulde much joy in my gay house, or in aniething belonging thereunto, when, if I shoulde be but seven years buried underground, and then arise and come hither agayn, I shoulde not fail to find some therein that would bid me get out of doors, and tell me 'twas none of mine. What cause have I then, to care so greatlie for a house that woulde soe soone forget its master?" . .

“ And then, mother ! and then ?”

Soe then, sweetheart, hs sayth, ‘ Come, tell me, Mrs. Alice, how long do you think we might reckon on living to enjoy it ?’ Soe I say, ‘ Some twenty years, forsooth.’ ‘ In faith,’ says he, ‘ had you said some thousand years, it had beene somewhat ; and yet he were a very bad merchant that would put himselfe in danger to lose eternity for a thousand years. how much the rather if we are not sure to enjoy it one day to an end ?’ Soe then he puts me off with questions, How is Will ? and Daisy ? and Rupert ? and this one ? and t’other one ? and the peacocks ? and rabbits ? and have we elected a new king of the cob-loaf yet ? and has Tom found his hoop ? and is y^e hasp of the buttery-hatch mended yet ? and how goes the court ? and what was the text o’Sunday ? and have I practised the viol ? and how are we off for

money? and why can't he see Meg? Then he asks for this book and t'other book, but I've forgot their names, and he sayth he's kept mighty short of meat, though 'tis little he eats, but his man John a Wood is gay and hungry, and 'tis worth a world to see him at a salt herring. Then he gives me counsell of this and that, and puts his arm about me and says, 'Come, let us pray;' but while he kept praying for one and t'other, I kept a-counting of his gray hairs; he'd none a month agone. And we're scarce off our knees, when I'm fetched away; and I say, 'When will you change your note, and act like a wise man?' and he sayth, 'When? when? looking very profound; 'why, when gorse is out of blossom and kissing out of fashion.' Soe puts me forthe by the shoulders with a laugh, calling after me, 'Remember me over and over agayn to them alle, and let me see Meg.'"

. . . . I feel as if a string were tied tight about my heart. Methinketh 'twill burst if we goe on long soe.

He hath writ us a few lines with a coal, ending

with "Sursum corda, dear children! up with your hearts." The bearer was dear Bonvisi.

The Lord begins to cut us short. We are now on very meagre commons, dear mother being obliged to pay fifteen shillings a-week for the board, poor as it is, of father and his servant. She hath parted with her velvet gown, embroidered overthwart, to my lady Sand's woman. Her mantle edged with coney went long ago.

But we lose not heart; I think mine is becoming annealed in the furnace, and will not now break. I have writ somewhat after this fashion to him "What do you think, most dear father, doth comfort us at Chelsea, during this your absence? Surelie, the remembrance of your manner of life among us, your holy conversation, your wholesome counsells, your examples of virtue, of which there is hope that they do not onlie persevere with you, but that, by God's grace, they are much increast."

I weary to see him. . . . Yes we shall meet in heaven, but how long first, oh Lord? how long?

Now that I've come back, let me seek to think, to remember. . . . Sure, my head will clear by-and-by? Strange, that feeling shoulde have the masterdom of thought and memory, in matters it is most concerned to retayn.

. . . I minded to put y^e haircloth and cord under my farthingale, and one or two of y^e smaller books in my pouch, as alsoe some sweets and suckets such as he was used to love. Will and Bonvisi were awaiting for me, and deare Bess, putting forthe her head from her chamber door, ories pitiously, "Tell him, dear Meg, tell him . . . 'twas never soe sad to me to be sick . . . and that I hope . . . I pray . . . the time may come . . ." then falls back swooning into Dancey's arms, whom I leave crying heartilie over her, and hasten below to receive the confused medley of messages sent by every other member of y^e house. For mine owne part, I was in such a tremulous succussion as to be scarce fitt to stand or goe, but time and the tide will noe man bide, and, once having taken boat, the cool river air allayed my fevered spiritts; onlie I could not for awhile get rid of y^e impression of poor Dancey crying over Bess in her deliquium.

I think none o' the three opened our lips before we reached Lambeth, save in y^e Reach,

Will cried to y° steersman, "Look you run us not aground," in a sharper voyce than I e'er heard from him. After passing y° Archbishop's palace, whereon I gazed full ruefullie, good Bonvisi beganne to mention some rhymes he had founde writ with a diamond on one of his window-panes at Crosby House, and would know were they father's! and was't y° chamber father had used to sleep in? I tolde him it was, but knew nought of y° distich, though 'twas like enow to be his. And thence he went on to this and that, how that father's cheerfullie, funny humour never forsook him, nor his brave heart quelled, instancing his fearless passage through the Traitor's Gate, asking his neighbours whether *his* gait was that of a traditor; and, on being sued by the porter for his upper garment, giving him his *cap*, which he sayd was uppermost. And other such quips and passages, which I scarce noted nor smiled at, soe sorry was I of cheer.

At length we stayed rowing: Will lifted me out, kissed me, heartened me up, and, indeede, I was in better heart then, having been quietlie in prayer a good while. After some few forms, we were led through sundrie turns and passages, and, or ever I was aware, I found mysefe quit of my companions, and in father's arms.

We both oried a little at first; I wonder I wept noe more, but strength was given me in that hour. As soone as I coulde, I lookt him in the face, and he lookt at me, and I was beginning to note his hollow cheeks, when he sayd, "Why, Meg, you are getting freckled:" soe that made us both laugh. He sayd, "You should get some freckle-water of the lady that sent me here; depend on it, she hath washes and tinctures in plenty; and after all, Meg, she'll come to the same end at last, and be as the lady all bone and skin, whose ghastlie legends used to scare thee soe when thou wert a child. Don't tell that story to thy children; 'twill hamper 'em with unsavory images of death. Tell them of heavenlie hosts a-waiting to carry off good men's souls in fire-bright chariots, with horses of the sun, to a land where they shall never more be surbated and weary, but walk on cool, springy turf and among myrtle trees, and eat fruits that shall heal while they delight them, and drink the coldest of cold water, fresh from y^e river of life, and have space to stretch themselves, and bathe, and leap, and run, and, whiohever way they look, meet Christ's eyes smiling on them. Lord, Meg, who would live that could die? One mighte as lief be an angel shut up in a nutshell as bide here. Fancy how glad-

some the sweet spirit would be to have the shell cracked! no matter by whom; the king, or king's mistress . . . Let her dainty foot but set him free, he'd say, 'For this release, much thanks.' . . . And how goes the court, Meg?

"In faith, father, never better. . . . There is nothing else there, I hear, but dancing and disporting."

"Never better, child, sayst thou? Alas, Meg, it pitieth me to consider what misery, poor soul, she will shortlie come to. These dances of hers will prove such dances that she will spurn our heads off like footballs; but 'twill not be long ere her head will dance the like dance. Mark you, Meg; a man that restraineth not his passions, hath always something cruel in his nature, and if there be a woman toward, she is sure to suffer heaviest for it, first or last. . . . Seek Scripture precedent for't . . . you'll find it as I say. Stony as death, cruel as the grave. Those Pharisees that there, to a man, convicted of sin, yet haled a sinning woman before the Lord, and woulde fain have seen the dogs lick up her blood. When they lick up mine, deare Meg, let not your heart be troubled, even though they shoulde hale thee to London Bridge to see my head stuck on a pole. Think, most dear'st, I shall then have more reason

to weep for thee than thou for me. But there's noe weeping in heaven, and bear in mind, Meg, distinctlie, that if they send me thither, 'twill be for obeying the law of God rather than of men. And after alle, we live not in the bloody, barbarous old times of crucifyings and flayings, and immerseings in cauldrons of boiling oil. One stroke, and the affair's done. A clumsy chirurgeon would be longer extracting a tooth. We have oft agreed that the little birds struck down by the kite and hawk suffer less than if they were reserved to a naturall death. There is one sensible difference, indeed, between us. In our cases, preparation is a-wanting."

Hereon, I minded me to slip off y^e haircloth and rope, and give the same to him, along with the books and suckets, all which he hid away private-lie, making merry at the last.

"'Twoulde tell well before the council," quoth he, "that on searching the prison-cell of Sir Thomas More, there was founde, flagitiouslie and mysteriouslie laid up . . . a piece of barley-sugar!"

Then we talked over sundry home-matters ; and anon, having now both of us attayned unto an equable and chastened serenitie of mind, which needed not any false shows of mirth to hide

y^e naturall complexion of, he sayth, "I believe, Meg, they that have put me here ween they have done me a high displeasure; but I assure thee on my faith, mine own good daughter, that if it had not beene for my wife, and you, my dear good children, I would faine have been closed up, long ere this, in as straight a room, and straighter too."

Thereon, he shewed me how illegal was his imprisonment, there being noe statute to authorize the imposition of y^e oath, and he delivered himself, with some displeasure, agaynst the king's ill counsellors.

"And surelie, Meg," quoth he, "'tis pitie that anie Christian prince shoulde, by a flexible council readie to follow his affections, and by a weak clergy lacking grace to stand constantly to the truth as they learned it, be with flattery so constantly abused. The lotus fruit fabled by the ancients, which made them that ate it lose alle relish for the daylie bread of their own homes, was flattery, Meg, as I take it, and nothing else. And what less was the song of the Syrens, agaynst which Ulysses made the sailors stop their ears, and which he, with all his wisdom, coulde not listen to without struggling to be unbound from the mast? Even praise, Meg, which, moderately

given, may animate and cheer forward the noblest minds, yet too lavishly bestowed, will decrease and palsy their strength, e'en as an overdose of the most generous and sprightlie medicine may prove mortiferous. But flattery is noe medicine, but a rank poison, which hath slayn kings; yea, and mighty kings; and they who love it, the Lord knoweth afar off; knoweth distantlie, has no care to know intimatelie, for they are none of his.

Thus we went on, from one theme to another, till methinketh a heavenlie light seemed to shine alle about us like as when the angel entered the prison of Peter. I hung upon every word and thought that issued from his lips, and drank them in as thirsty land sucks up the tender rain. . . . Had the angel of death at that hour come to fetch both of us away, I woulde not have sayd him nay, I was soe passivelie, so intenselie happy. At length, as time wore on, and I knew I shoulde soone be fetcht forthe, I coulde not but wish I had the clew to some secret passage or subterranean, of which there were doubtless plenty in the thick walls, whereby we might steal off together. Father made answer, "Wishes never filled a sack. I make it my businesse, Meg, to wish as little as I can, except that I were better and wiser. You fancy these four walls lonesome; how oft, dost

thou suppose, I here receive Plato and Socrates, and this and that holy saint and martyr? My jailors can noe more keep them out than they can exclude the sunbeams. Thou knowest, Jesus stood among his disciples when the doors were shut. I am not more lonely than St. Anthony in his cave, and I have a divine light e'en here, whereby to con the lesson 'God is love.' The futility of our enemies' efforts to make us miserable was never more stronglie proven to me than when I was a mere boy in Cardinal Morton's service. Having unwittinglie angered one of his chaplains, a choleric and even malignant-spirited man, he did, of his owne authoritie, shut me up for some hours in a certayn damp vault, which to a lad afeard of ghosts and devilish apparitions, would have been fearsome enow. Howbeit, I there cast myself on the ground with my back sett agaynst the wall, and mine arm behind my head, this fashion and did then and there, by reason of a young heart, quiet conscience, and quick phansy, conjure up such a lively picture of the queen o' the faries' court, and alle the sayings and doings therein, that never was I more sorry than when my gaoler let me goe free, and bade me rise up and be doing. In place, therefore, my daughter, of thinking of me in thy night wathes as beating my wings agaynst

my cage bars, trust that God comes to look in upon me without knocking or bell ringing. Often in spirit I am with you all ; in the chapel, in the hall, in the garden ; now in the hayfield, with my head on thy lap, now on the river, with Will and Rupert at the oar. You see me not about your path, you won't see my disembodied spirit beside you hereafter, but it may be close upon you once and agayn for alle that : maybe, at times when you have prayed with most passion, or suffered with most patience, or performed my hests with most exactness, or remembered my care of you with most affection. And now, good speed, good Meg, I hear the key turn in the door This kiss for thy mother, this for Bess, this for Cecil,this and this for my whole school. Keep dry eyes and a hopeful heart ; and reflect that nought but unpardoned sin should make us weep forever.

September.

Seeing y° woodman fell a noble tree, which, as it went to the ground, did uptear several small plants by y° roots, methought such woulde be the fall of dear father, herein more sad than that of the

abbot of Sion and the Charterhouse monks, inas-much as, being celibate, they involve noe others in their ruin. Brave, holie martyrs ! how cheerfully they went to their death. I'm glad to have seene how pious men may turn e'en an ignominious sentence into a kind of euthanasy. Dear father bade me note how they bore themselves as bride-grooms going to their marriage, and converted what mighte have beene a shock to my surcharged spiritts, into a lesson of deep and high comfort.

One thing hath grieved me sorelie. He mistook somewhat I sayd at parting for an implication of my wish that he shoulde yield up his conscience. Oh, no, dearest father, that be far from me ! It seems to have cut him to the heart, for he hath writ that " none of the terrible things that may befall him touch him soe nearlie as that his dearly beloved child, whose opinion he soe much values, shoulde desire him to overrule his conscience." That be far from me, father ! I have writ to explain the matter, but his reproach, undeserved though it be, hath troubled my heart.

November.

Parliament will meet to-morrow. 'Tis expected,

father and y° good bishop of Rochester will be attained for misprision of treason by y° slavish members thereof, and though not given hithertoe unto much heede of omens and bodements while our hearts were light and our courage high, yet now y° coming evil seemeth fore-shadowed unto alle by I know not how many melancholiok presages, sent, for aught we know, in mercy. Now that the days are dark and short, and the nights stormy, we shun to linger much after dusk in lone chambers and passages, and what was sayd of the enemies of Israel may be nigh sayd of us, "that a falling leaf shall chase them." I'm sure "a going in the tops of the mulberry-trees" on a blustering evening, is enow to draw us alle, men, mothers, and maids, together in a heap. We goe about y° house in twos and threes and care not much to leave the fireside. Last Sunday we had closed about y° the hearth, and little Bill was a reading by the fire-light how Herodias' daughter danced off the head of St. John the Baptist, when down comes an emptie swallow's nest tumbling adown the chimnie, bringing with it enow of soot, smoke, and rubbish to half smother us alle; but the dust was nothing to the dismay thereby occasioned, and I noted one or two of our bravest turn as pale as death. Then the rats have skirmished and galloped behind the

wainscoat more like a troop of horse than a herd of such smaller deer, to y^e infinite annoyance of mother, who coulde not be more firmly persuaded they were about to leave a falling house, if like the sacred priest in the temple of Jerusalem, she had heard a voyce utter, " Let us depart hence." The round upper half of the cob-loaf rolled off the table this morning, and Rupert, as he picked it up, gave a kind of shudder and muttered somewhat about a head rolling from the scaffold. Worse than this was o' Tuesday night. 'Twas bedtime, and yet none were liking to goe, when o' suddain, we hearde a screech that made everybody's heart thrill, followed by one or two hollow groans. Will snatches up the lamp and runs forth, I close following, and alle the others at our heels, and after looking into sundrie deserted cupboards and corners, we descend the broad stone steps of the cellars, half-way down which Will, stumbling over something he sees not, takes a flying leap to clear himself down to the bottom, luckily without extinguishing the lamp. We find Gillian on the steps in a swoon; on bringing her to, she exclayms about a ghost without a head, wrapped in a winding-sheet, that confronted her and then sank to the ground as she entered the vaults. We cast a fearfulle look about, and descry a tall white sack of flour, re-

cently overturned by the rats, which clears up the mystery, and procures Gillian a little jeering, but we alle return to the hall with fluttered spiritts. Another time I, going up to the nurserie in the dark, on hearing baby cry, am passed on the stairs by I know not what breathing heavilie. I reach forthe my arm, but pass cleare through the spirituall nature, whatever it is, yet distinctlie feel my cheek and neck fanned by its breath. I turn very faint, and get nurse to goe with me when I return, bearing a light, yet think it as well to say naught to distress the rest.

But worst of alle was last night After I had been in bed a while, I minded me that deare Will had not returned my father's letter. I awoke him and asked if he had broughte it up stairs; he sleepily replied he had not, soe I hastily arose, threw on a cloke, took a light, and entered the gallery, when, half way along it, between me and the pale moonshine, I was scared to behold a slender figure alle in white, with naked feet and arms extended. I stood agaze, speechlesse, and to my terror made out the features of Bess . . . her eyes open, but vacant; then saw John Dancey softly stealing after her, and signing to me with his finger on his lips. She passed, without noting me, on to father's door, there knelt as if in prayer,

making a low sort of wail, while Dancey, with tears running down his cheeks, whispered, "'Tis the third time of her thus sleep-walking the token of how troubled a mind!"

We disturbed her not, dreading that a suddain waking might bring on madness; soe, after making moan awhile, she kisses the senseless door, raises up, moves towards her own chamber, followed by Dancey and me, wrings her hands a little, then lies down, and graduallie falls into what seems a dreamless sleep, we watching her in silence till she's quiet, and then squeezing each other's hands ere we part.

. Will was wide awake when I got back; he said, "Why, Meg, how long you have beene! coulde you not lighte on the letter?" When I tolde him what had hindered me by the way, he turned his face to the wall and wept.

Midnight.

The wild wind is abroad, and, methinketh, *nothing else*. Sure, how it rages through our empty courts! In such a season, men, beasts, and fowls cower beneath y° shelter of their rocking walls, yet almost fear to trust them. Lord, I

know that thou canst give the tempest double force, but do not, I beseech thee! Oh! have mercy on the frail dwelling and the ship at sea.

Dear little Bill hath ta'en a feverish attack. I watch beside him while his nurse sleeps. Earlie in the night his mind wandered, and he told me of a pretty ring-streaked poney noe bigger than a bee that had golden housings and barley-sugar eyes; then dozed, but ever and anon kept starting up, crying "Mammy, dear!" and softlie murmured, "Oh," when he saw I was by. At length I gave him my forefinger to hold, which kept him ware of my presence without speaking, but presentlie he stares hard toward y^e foot of the bed, and says fearfullie, "Mother, why hangs yon hatchet in the air, with its sharp edge turned towards us!" I rise, move the lamp, and say, "Do you see it now?" He sayth, "No, not now," and closes his eyes. After a good space, during the which I hoped he slept, he says in quite an altered tone, most like unto soft, sweet music, "There's a pretty little cherub there now, alle head and noe body, with two little wings aneath his chin; but, for alle he's soe pretty, he is just like dear Gaffer, and seems to know me and he'll have a body agayn, too, I believe, by and by Mother, mother,

tell Hobbinol there's such a gentle lamb in heaven!"
And soe, slept.

He's gone, my pretty ! slipt through my
fingers like a bird ! upfled to his own native skies,
and yet whenas I think on him, I can not choose
but weepe Such a guileless little lamb ! . . .
My Billy-bird ! his mother's owne heart. They
are alle wondrous kind to me

How strange that a little child shoulde be per-
mitted to suffer soe much payn, when of such is
the kingdom of heaven ! But 'tis onlie transient,
whereas a mother makes it permanent, by think-
ing it over and over agayn. One lesson it taughte
us betimes, that a naturall death is not, necessarilie
the most easie. We must alle die. As poor
Patteson was used to say, " The greatest king that
ever was made, must bed at last with shovel and
spade." and I'd sooner have my Billy's baby
deathbed than King Harry's, or Nan Boleyn's
either, however manie years they may yet carry
matters with a high hand. Oh, you ministers of

evill, whoever you be, visible or invisible, you shall not build a wall between my God and me I've something within me, grows stronger and stronger, as times grow more and more evill; some woulde call it resolution, but methinketh 'tis faith.

Meantime, father's foes alack that anie can show 'emselves such! are aiming, by fayr seemings of friendlie conference, to draw from him admissions they can come at after noe other fashion. The new Solicitor General hath gone to y^e Tower to deprive him of y^e few books I have taken him from time to time Ah, Master Rich, you must deprive him of his brains afore you can rob him of their contents! and, while having 'em packt up, he falls into easie dialogue with him, as thus Why now, sure, Mr. More, were there an act of parliament made that alle y^e relm shoulde take me for king, you woulde take me for such with the rest."

"Aye, that would I, sir," returns father.

"Forsooth, then," pursues Rich, "we'll suppose another act that should make me the Pope. Would you not take me for Pope?"

"Or suppose another case, Mr. Rich," returns father, "that another act shoulde pass, that God shoulde not be God, would you say well and good!"

“ No, trully,” returns the other hastily, “ for no parliament coulde make such act lawful.”

“ True as you say,” repeats father, “ they coulde not” soe eluded the net of the fowler ; but how miserable and unhandsome a device to lay wait for him thus, to catch him in his talk.

. I stole forthe, ere 'twas lighte, this damp, chill morning, to pray beside the little grave but found dear Daisy there before me. How Christians love one another !

Will's loss is as heavie as mine, yet he bears with me tenderlie. Yesternighte, he sayth to me half reproachfullie, “ Am not I better unto thee than ten sons !”

March, 1534.

Spring comes, that brings rejuvenescence to y^e land and joy to the heart, but it brings none to us, for where hope dieth, joy dieth. But patience, soul ; God's yet in the aunry !

May 7. Father arraigned.

July 1. By reason of Will's minding to be present at y^e triall, which, for the concourse of spectators, demanded his earlie attendance, he committed the care of me with Bess, to Dancey, who got us places to see father on his way from the Tower to Westminster Hall. We could not come at him for the press, but clambered on a bench to gaze our very hearts away after him as he went by, sallow, thin, gray-haired, yet in mein not a whit cast down. Wrapt in a coarse woollen gown, and leaning on a staff, which unwonted support when Bess markt, she hid her eyes on my shoulder and wept sore, but soon lookt up agayn, though her eyes were soe blinded, I think she could not see him. His face was calm, but grave, as he came up, but just as he passed he caughte the eyes of some one in the crowd, and smiled in his old, frank way; then glanced up toward the windows with the bright look he hath soe oft cast to me at my casement, but saw us not. I could not help crying "Father," but he heard me not; perchance 'twas soe best. I woulde not have had his face cloud at y^e sighte of poor Bessy's tears.

. Will tells me the indictment was y^e longest ever hearde; on four counts. First, his opinion on the king's marriage. Second, his writing sundrie letters to the Bishop of Rochester, counsell-

ing him to hold out. Third, refusing to acknowledge his grace's supremacy. Fourth, his positive deniall of it, and thereby willing to deprive the king of his dignity and title.

When the reading of this was over, the Lord Chancellor sayth, " You see how grievouslie you have offended the king his grace, but and yet he is soe mercifulle, as that if ye will lay aside your obstinacie, and change your opinion, we hope ye may yet obtayn pardon."

Father makes answer and at sounde of his deere voyce alle men hold their breaths

" Most noble Lords, I have great cause to thank your honors for this your courtesie but I pray Almighty God I may continue in the mind I'm in, through his grace until death."

They coulde not make good their accusation agaynst him. 'Twas onlie on the last count he could be made out a traitor, and proof of 't had they none ; how coulde they have ? He shoulde have been acquitted out of hand, 'steade of which, his bitter enemy, my Lord Chancellor, called on him for his defense. Will sayth there was a general murmur or sigh ran through y^e court. Father, however, answered the bidding by beginning to express his hope that the effect of long imprisonment mighte not have beene such upon his

mind and body, as to impair his power of rightlie meeting alle y^o charges agaynst him when, turning faint with long standing, he staggered and lcosed hold of his staff, whereon he was accorded a seat. 'Twas but a moment's weakness of the body, and he then proceeded frankly to avow his having alway opposed the king's marriage to his grace himself, which he was soe far from thinking high treason, that he shoulde rather have deemed it treachery to have withholden his opinion from his sovereign king when solicited by him for his counsell. His letters to y^o good Bishop he proved to have been harmlesse. Touching his declining to give his opinion, when askt, concerning the supremacy, he alleged there coulde be noe transgression in holding his peace thereon, God only being cognizant of our thoughts.

"Nay," interposeth the Attorney-Generall, "your silence was the token of a malicious mind."

"I had always understood," answers father, "that silence stooede for consent. Qui tacet, consentire videtur;" which made sundrie smile. On the last charge, he protested he had never spoken word against y^o law unto anie man.

The jury are about to acquit him, when up starts the Solicitor Generall, offers himself as witness for the crown, is sworn, and gives evidence of his dia-

logue with father in the Tower, falselie adding, like a liar as he is, that on his saying "No parliament coulde make a law that God shoulde not be God," father had rejoined, "No more coulde they make the king supreme head of the Church."

I marvell the ground opened not at his feet. Father brisklie made answer, "If I were a man, my lords, who regarded not an oath, ye know well I needed not stand now at this bar. And if the oath which you, Mr. Rich, have just taken, be true, then I pray I may never see God in the face. In good truth, Mr. Rich, I am more sorry for your perjurie than my perill. You and I once dwelt long together in one parish; your manner of life and conversation from your youth up were familiar to me, and it paineth me to tell ye were ever held very light of your tongue, a great dicer and gamester, and not of any commendable fame either there or in the Temple, the inn to which ye have belonged. Is it credible, therefore, to your lordships, that the secrets of my conscience touching the oath, which I never would reveal, after the statute once made, either to the king's grace himself, nor to anie of you, my honorable lords, I should have thus lightly blurted out in private parley with Mr. Rich?"

In short, the villain made not goode his poynt;

ne'erthelesse, the issue of this black day was a fore-hand fixed ; my Lord Audley was primed with a virulent and venomous speech ; the jury retired, and presentlie returned with a verdict of Guilty ; for they knew what the king's grace would have 'em doe in that case.

Up starts my Lord Audley—commences pronouncing judgment, when—

“ My lord,” says father, “ in my time, the custom in these cases was ever to ask the prisoner before sentence, whether he could give anie reason why judgment shoulde not proceed agaynst him.”

My lord, in some confusion, puts the question.

And them came y^e frightfulle sentence.

Yes, yes, my soul, I know ; there were saints of old sawn asunder. Men of whom the world was not worthy.

. Then he spake unto 'em his mind, how that after lifelong studdy, he could never find that a layman mighte be head of the church. And bade his judges and accusers farewell ; hoping that like as St. Paul was present and consenting unto St. Stephen's death and yet both were now holy saints in heaven, soe he and they might speedilie meet there, joint heirs of e'erlasting salvation.

Meantime poor Bess and Cecilie, spent with grief and long waiting, were forct to be carried home by

Heron, or ever father returned to his prison. Was't less feeling, or more strength of body, enabled me to bide at the Tower wharf with Dancey? God knoweth. They brought him back by water; my poor sisters must have passed him The first thing I saw was the ax, *turned with its edge toward him*—my first note of his sentence. I forct my way through the crowd some one laid a cold hand on my arm; 'twas poor Patteson, soe changed I scarce knew him, with a rosary of gooseberries he kept running through his fingers. He sayth, Bide your time, mistress Meg; when he comes past, I'll make a passage for ye Oh, brother, brother! what ailed thee to refuse the oath? *I've taken it!*" In another moment, "Now, mistress, now!" and flinging his arms right and left, made a breach through which I darted, fearlesse of bills and halberds, and did fling mine arms about father's neck. He cries, "My Meg!" and hugs me to him as though our very souls shoulde grow together. He sayth, "Bless thee, bless thee! Enough, enough, my child; what mean ye, to weep and break mine heart? Remember, though I die innocent, 'tis not without the will of God, who could send 's angels to rescue me if 'twere best; therefore possess your soul in patience. Kiss them all for me, thus and thus" . .

. . . . soe gave me back into Dancey's arms, the guards about him alle weeping ; but I coulde not thus lose sight of him forever ; soe, after a minute's pause, did make a second rush, brake away from Dancey, clave to father agayn, and agayn they had pitie on me, and made pause while I hung upon his neck. This time there were large drops standing on his dear brow ; and the big tears were swelling into his eyes. He whispered, " Meg, for Christ's sake don't unman me ; thou'lt not deny my last request ?" I sayd, " Oh ! no ;" and at once loosened mine arms. " God's blessing be with you," he sayth with a last kiss. I could not help crying, " My Father ! my father !" " The chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof !" he vehementlie whispers, pointing upward with soe passionate a regard, that I look up, almost expecting a beatific vision ; and when I turn about agayn, he's gone, and I have noe more sense, nor life till I find myself agayn in mine own chamber, my sisters chafing my hands.

Alle's over now they've done theire worst, and yet I live. There were women coulde stand aneath y^e cross. The Maccabees' mother—

yes, my soul, yes; I know—Naught but unpardoned sin The chariot of Israel.

Dr. Clement hath beene with us. Sayth he went up as blythe as a bridegroom to be clothed upon with mortality.

Rupert stode it alle out. Perfect love casteth out feare. Soe did his.

. My most precious treasure is this deare billet, writ with a coal; the last thing he sett his hand to, wherein he sayth, “I never liked your manner toward me better than when you kissed me last.”

They have let us bury his poor mangled trunk; but, as sure as there's a sun in heaven, I'll have his head!—before another sun hath risen, too. If wise men won't speed me, I'll e'en content me with a fool.

I doe think men, for y^e most part, be cowards in their hearts moral cowards. Here and there, we find one like father, and like Socrates, and like this and that one, I mind not their names

just now ; but in y^e main, me thinketh they lack the moral courage of woman. Maybe, I'm unjust to 'em just now, being crost.

. I lay down, but my heart was waking. Soon after the first cock crew, I hearde a pebble cast agaynst my lattice, knew y^e signall, rose, dressed, stole softlie down and let myself out. I knew the touch of y^e poor fool's fingers ; his teeth were chattering, 'twixt cold and fear, yet he laught aneath his breath as he caught my arm and dragged me after him, whispering, " Fool and fayr lady will cheat 'em yet." At the stairs lay a wherry with a couple of boatmen, and one of 'em stepping up to me, cries, " Alas for ruth, mistress Meg, what is 't ye do ? Art mad to go on this errand ?" I sayed, " I shall be mad if I go not, and succeed too—put me in, and push off."

We went down the river quietlie enow—at length reach London Bridge stairs. Patteson, starting up, says, " Bide ye all as ye are," and springs aland and runneth up to the bridge. Anon returns, and sayth, " Now, mistress, alle's readie readier than ye wist come up quickly, for the coast's clear." Hobson (for 'twas he) helps

me forth, saying, "God speed ye, mistress
Gin I dared, I woulde goe with ye." Thought
I, there be others in that case.

Nor lookt I up, till aneath the bridge-gate, when casting upward a fearsome look, I beheld y^e dark outline of the ghastly yet precious relic; and, falling into a tremour, did wring my hands and exclaym, "Alas, alas, that head hath lain full manie a time in my lap, woulde God, woulde God it lay there now!" When, o' suddain, I saw the pole tremble and sway toward me; and stretching forth my apron, I did in an extasy of gladness, pity, and horror, catch its burthen as it fell. Patteson, shuddering, yet grinning, cries under his breath, "Managed I not well, mistress? Let's speed away with our theft, for fools and their treasures are soon parted; but I think not they'll follow hard after us, neither, for there are well-wishers to us on the bridge. I'll put ye into the boat, and then say, God speed ye, lady, with your burthen."

Rizpah, daughter of Aiah, did watch her dead from the beginning of harvest until the latter rain, and suffered neither the birds of the air to light on them by day, nor the wild beasts of the field by

night. And it was told the king, but he intermeddled not with her.

Argia stole Polynices' body by night and buried it, for the which, she with her life did willingly pay forfeit. Antigone, for aiding in the pious theft, was adjudged to be buried alive. Artemisia did make herself her loved one's shrine, by drinking his ashes. Such is the love of woman; many waters can not quench it, neither can the floods drown it. I've hearde Bonvisi tell of a poor Italian girl, whose brothers did slay her lover; and in spite of them, she got his heart, and buried it in a pot of basil, which she watered day and night with her tears, just as I do my coffer. Will has promised it shall be buried with me; layd upon my heart; and since then, I've beene easier.

He thinks he shall write father's life, when he gets more composed, and we are settled in a new home. We are to be cleared out o' this in alle haste; the king grutches at our lingering over fathers's footsteps, and gazing on the dear familiar scenes associate with his image; and yet, when the news of the bloody deed was taken to him, as he sate playing at tables with Queen Anne, he, started up and scowled at her, saying, "Thou art the cause of this man's death!" Father might well say, during our last precious meeting in the

Tower, " 'Tis I, Meg, not the king, that love women. They bely him ; he onlie loves himself." Adding, with his own sweet smile, " Your Gaffer used to say that women were a bag of snakes, and and that the man who put his hand therein would be lucky if he founde one eel among them alle ; but 'twas onlie in sport, Meg, and he owned that I had enough eels to my share to make a goodly pie, and called my house the eel-pie house to the day of his death. 'Twas our Lord Jesus raised up women and shewed kindnesse unto 'em, and they've kept their level, in the main, ever since."

I wish Will may sett down everie thing of father's saying he can remember ; how precious will his book then be to us ! But I fear me, these matters adhere not to a man's memory he'll be telling of his doings as Speaker and Chancellor, and his saying this and that in Parliament. Those are the matters men like to write and to read ; he won't write it after my fashion.

I had a misgiving of Will's wrath, that night, 'speciallie if I failed ; but he called me his brave Judith. Indeed I was a woman bearing a head, but one that had oft lain on my shoulder.

My thoughts beginne to have connexion now ; but till last night, I slept not. 'Twas scarce sun-sett. Mercy had been praying beside me, and I

lay outside my bed, inclining rather to stupor than sleep. O' suddain, I have an impression that some one is leaning over me, though I hear 'em not, nor feel theire breath. I start 'up, cry "Mercy!" but she's not there nor anie one else. I turn on my side and become heavie to sleep; but or ere I drop quite off, again I'm sensible or apprehensive of some living consciousness between my closed eyelids and the setting sunlight; agayn start up and stare about, but there's nothing. Then I feel like like Eli, maybe, when the child Samuel came to him twice; and tears well into mine eyes, and I close 'em agayn, and say in mine heart, "If he's at hand, oh, let me see him next time the third time's lucky." But 'stead of this, I fall into quiet, balmy dreamlesse sleep. Since then, I've had an abiding, assuring sense of help, of a hand upholding me, and smoothing and glibbing the way before me.

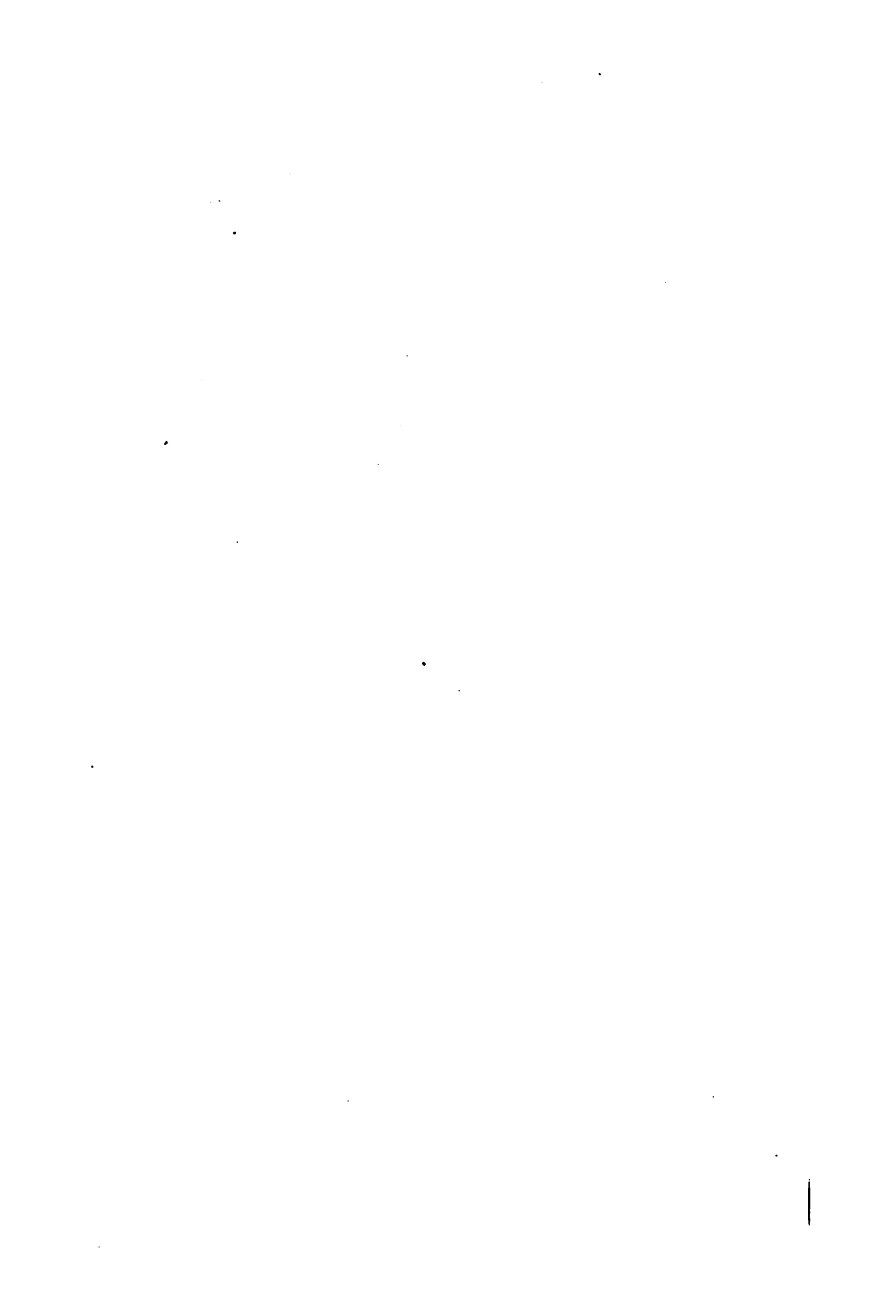
We must yield to y^e powers that be. At this present, we are weak, but they are strong; they are honourable, but we are despised. They have made us a spectacle unto the world, and, I think, Europe will ring with it; but at this present hour, they will have us forth of our home, though we have as yet no certayn dwelling place, and must flee as scared pigeons from their dove-cot. No

matter. our men are willing to labour, and our women to endure ; being reviled, we bless ; being persecuted, we suffer it. Onlie I marvell how anie honest man, coming after us, will be able to eat a mouthful of bread with a relish within these walls. And, methinketh, a dishonest man will have sundrie frights from the Lares and Lemures. There 'ill be dearth o' black beans in y^e market.

Flow on, bright shining Thames. A good brave man hath walked aforetime on your margent, himself as bright, and usefull, and delightsome as be you, sweet river. And like you, he never murmured ; like you, he upbore the weary, and gave drink to the thirsty, and reflected heaven in his face. I'll not swell your full current with any more fruitless tears. There's a river whose streams make glad the city of our God. He now rests beside it. Good Christian folks, as they hereafter pass this spot, upborne on thy gentle tide, will, maybe, point this way, and say—"There dwelt Sir Thomas More ;" but whether they doe or not, *vox populi* is a very inconsiderable matter, for the majority are evil, and "*the people* sayd, Let him be crucified !" Who would live on their breath ? They hailed St. Paul as Jupiter, and then stoned him and cast him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. Their favourite of to-day may, for what

they care, goe hang himself to-morrow in his surcingle. Thus it must be while the the world lasts ; and the very racks and scrues wherewith they aim to overcome the nobler spiritt, onlie test and reveal its power of exaltation above the heaviest gloom of circumstance.

Interfecistis, interfecistis hominem omnium Anglorum optimum.







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